THE

ITALIAN NOVELISTS.

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THE "CHANDOS CL

THE ITALIAN NOVELISTS.

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WITH

CRITICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES

BY

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Novelle Antiche.



Of which the following is the ancient title: "*Novelle Antike*"; and in the frontispiece: "Fiori di parlare, di belle cortesie, e di belle valentie e doni, secondo ke per lo tempo passato anno fatto molti valentuomini," &c.

NOVELLE ANTICHE.



IL NOVELLINO,

LIBRO DI NOVELLE E DI BEL PARLAR GENTILE.

THE work thus entitled, containing the *Cento Novelle Antiche*, or *Hundred Ancient Tales*, is a collection of the earliest prose fictions now extant in the Italian tongue. The exact period of their production, and the names of their respective authors, are equally unknown to us; a circumstance which, combined with their own intrinsic character, seems to establish their claim to equal antiquity with the rise and formation of the *lingua volgare* of the South. Many of them are referred by Italian critics and historians to an age anterior to that of Dante, while it is agreed that few of them are the production of the same or of a subsequent era.

Those who have made the most minute researches into the subject, Salviati, Salvini, Manni, Tiraboschi, &c., differ greatly in their opinion, both as to the period and the origin of the Ancient Tales. Yet the learned Manni, editor of the "Novelliero," to whom, perhaps, the greatest degree of credit is due, conjectures they must have been written in the thirteenth century, not long after the death of the tyrant Ezzelin da Romano, about the year 1359 The same author further supposes that they derived their origin, for the most part, from Provence; one of the chief sources, no less of the poetical than of the prosaic fictions of Italy. Nor is it improbable that they were first introduced along with the songs of the Troubadours, whose language was so frequently adopted by the earliest poets of Italy; and were thus, together with their style of narrative, first naturalised, and then so admirably improved upon, by the genius of Boccaccio.

Not a few of the stories in the "Decameron" may in this way be traced to the Provençal, and others to the romance of the "Seven Wise Men," entitled "DOLOPATHOS," written in Latin by the monk Giovanni, of the monastery of Altaselva.

That Italy is indebted for her *Novelle Antiche* to foreign sources, would further appear from many of the stories being founded on incidents drawn from the romance of the ROUND TABLE, a beautiful

copy of which was known to be in possession of Brunetto Latini, the master of Dante, a great admirer of its marvellous adventures, and probably the author of those pieces we find taken from the materials of that romance Such are the novels of the "Lady of Scalot," and of the "Good King Meliadus," which with a few others of the same exotic character, among the best, says Mr. Dunlop, in the whole collection, we have ventured to give, as the most favourable specimens the work could afford. But it is rather with regard to their merits in exhibiting the progress of language and of manners, together with several curious historical facts, than from any intrinsic excellence they may be said to possess, that they are at all deserving of notice. And even this remark will chiefly apply to the work in its original language of which the ancient edition, the earliest work known in the *lingua volgare*, and from which the subsequent editions have been taken, has been included among the *testi di lingua* of Italy. The most correct of these the Italians owe to the labours of Borghini and Vettori, although the edition published under the auspices of Cardinal Bembo, by Gualteruzzi at Bologna, has been always held in the highest repute. Besides that of the Giunti, there is a still more recent one, edited by Ferrario, and bearing the date of Milan, 1804.

Among the supposed authors of these elements of Italian fiction, may be enumerated the names of Dante da Majano, Brunetto Latini, Francesco da Barberino, with those of several other poets and scholars who flourished during the same period, fragments of whose works remain, but whose names have perished Many of the tales were added, in order to complete the cento, long after those contained in the MSS. or in the old edition made their appearance. These, however, are referred to the period in which they were written, so as not to interrupt the chronological view of the subject. preserved throughout the entire work. It is for this reason, indeed, that the following specimens from the *Novelle Antiche* have been inserted ; certainly not from any peculiar merit they can boast.

NOVELLA II.

HOW A LEARNED GREEK, WHOM A KING HELD IN PRISON, PASSED HIS JUDGMENT ON A HORSE

IN a certain part of Greece there lived a king of great sway, of the name of Philip This king, for some alleged crime or other, had imprisoned a Greek, a man of great learning, whose wisdom mounted to the skies It happened one day that this monarch received from the king of Spain a present of a noble horse, of great size, and of a beautiful form. The king sent for his farrier to learn his opinion of the horse, but he was told that he had better apply to the learned Greek, who was reputed a man of universal knowledge. He therefore

ordered the horse to be led into the field, and then commanded the Greek to be brought from his prison, and addressing him, said: "Master, let me have your opinion of this horse, for I have heard a great report of your wisdom." The Greek inspected the horse, and replied: "Sire, this horse is indeed a beautiful courser, but in my opinion he has been nurtured on asses' milk." The king sent to Spain to inquire how the horse had been brought up, and found that the dam had died, and that the foal, as the Greek had asserted, had been reared on asses' milk. This circumstance astonished the king not a little, and as a reward, he ordered half a loaf of bread a day to be given to the Greek at the expense of the court. It fell out on another occasion, that as the king was inspecting his jewels, he sent again for the Greek, and said to him "Master mine, your knowledge is great, and it seems that you know all things. Tell me, I pray you, whether or not you understand the virtue of these stones, and which of them seems to you the most valuable." The Greek replied: "Sire, which of them do you yourself consider as the most precious one?" The king then took up one of the most beautiful amongst them and said: "This one, master, seems to me the most beautiful, and one of the highest value." The Greek examined it, and straining it closely in the palm of his hand, and placing it to his ear, said. "This stone, sire, appears to me to have a living worm in it." The king sent for his lapidary, and ordered him to break the stone, and to their surprise the animal was found within. The king now looked upon the Greek as a man of surprising wisdom, and ordered a whole loaf of bread to be given him daily at the expense of the court. It happened not many days after this, that the king, entertaining some suspicions of his own legitimacy, again sent for the Greek, and taking him into his closet, said: "Master, I hold you for a man of great penetration, which indeed has been manifested in your answers to the questions I have proposed to you. I wish you now to inform me whose son I am" The Greek then replied: "Sire, how strange a request! You well know that you are the son of your honoured predecessor." But the king dissatisfied, said. "Do not evade my question, but tell me the truth implicitly; for if you hesitate, you shall instantly die the death of a traitor." 'Then, sire," answered the Greek, "I must inform you that you are the son of a baker." Upon this, the king being anxious to know the real truth, sent for the queen-mother, and by threats compelled her to confess that the words of the Greek were true The king then shut himself up in his chamber with the Greek, and said: "Master mine, I have received singular proofs of your wisdom, and I now entreat you to tell me how you have obtained a knowledge of these things" Then the Greek replied: "Sire, I will inform you. With respect to the horse, I knew that he had been nourished with asses' milk from his hanging his ears, which is not natural to a horse. And that there was a live worm in the stone I knew from the fact that stones are naturally cold, but this one I found to be warm, and it was therefore evident that the heat could only proceed from a living animal within." "And how," said the king, "did you discover that I was the son of a baker?" The Greek then replied: "Because when I told you of the

wonderful circumstance of the horse, you ordered me a gift of half a loaf a day, and when I told you of the stone with the living worm in it, you ordered me a whole loaf. I then felt assured whose son you were; for if you had really been a king's son, you would have presented me with a city, as my merits deserved; whereas your origin then betrayed itself, and your natural disposition was satisfied in giving me a loaf, as your father the baker would have done." The king was then sensible of his own meanness, and immediately liberated the Greek from prison, and loaded him with gifts of value.

NOVELLA XIX.

REMARKABLE PROOF OF LIBERALITY AND COURTESY IN THE KING OF ENGLAND.

KING JOHN of England was celebrated for his singular kindness and courtesy towards the poorer chevaliers of his court. It one day happened that during an entertainment, one of these gentlemen being in great distress, cast his eye upon a rich silver cover, thinking within himself: "If I could only obtain possession of that, my poor family would be rich indeed!" The next moment he contrived to hide it under his vest, when one of the stewards, on removing the covers, finding it had disappeared, an order was issued that every guest on leaving the place should be examined. But the king, being the only one whose eye had caught the poor knight in the fact, took an opportunity of accosting him, saying, in a whisper: "Slip it under my coat, for I think they will hardly be bold enough to search me,"—an order with which the wretched chevalier immediately complied. When he had undergone his examination at the porter's gate, his sovereign sent a messenger after him, and on his entering trembling into the presence, presented him with the utmost courtesy, not only with the cover, but with the more massy portion of plate belonging to it.

On another occasion he showed still greater courtesy to his poor chevaliers. They entered his chamber one evening with an intent to pillage, and having collected all the valuables they could lay their hands on, one of them, believing the king to be in a deep slumber, had the temerity to seize a rich embroidered counterpane over the king's couch, and beginning to pull it off, the king, without being perceived, held it fast. The others came to their comrade's assistance, and his majesty finding he had the worst of it, raised up his head a little, saying: "Nay, friends, this is no thieving; it is downright assault and battery! As for the rest, you do not steal them—I give them to you."

On hearing his majesty's voice, the ungrateful wretches fled, forgetting to take even the treasure already collected, which the king had given them.

When this prince's father was alive, he one day reproached his

son John, saying: "Thou spendthrift, where dost thou keep thy treasures?" The prince replied: "With your leave, my liege, I can show more than can your majesty still." Arguments upon this ensued, until at length both parties and their friends agreed to fix upon a certain day for the exhibition of their respective wealth. Prince John invited all the young nobility, who were his friends, to attend on the day appointed at the rendezvous, where a magnificent tent was prepared, underlaid with rich carpets and cloths of gold, to receive the immense treasures of gold and silver and precious gems in the possession of the king. The latter then turning to the prince, cried out in a triumphant tone: "Now let us see your wealth, my son!" On which the prince, drawing his sword like lightning from its sheath, a thousand blades on every side instantly sprang from their scabbards; and his young friends all rushed forward in a moment, as if the very streets and squares were filled with them, and possessed themselves of the royal treasures, in the face of the king and his attendants.

It was now too late for his majesty to repair his error; for the young prince, turning to his noble followers, exclaimed: "Make the best of the booty you have won;" and in a short time the enchanting scene of wealth and splendour totally disappeared from view.[1]

The king quickly assembled his forces to recover his lost treasures, while his son retired into a strong castle, with the valiant Bertrand de Born.[2] Here he was besieged by his father, and one day exposing his person, as usual, to every kind of danger, he was unfortunately shot through the head with an arrow upon the walls.

On hearing this, the whole of his creditors throughout the kingdom assembled together, petitioning payment of the various sums they had from time to time supplied; and they were admitted to an audience with the prince, just before his decease. To all the complaints that were preferred, the prince invariably replied: "I am sorry, my dear sir, you are come the day after the fair; but your money is spent. The truth is, I have given away all the fine things you supplied me with. My body is so very sick, that I am afraid it is no longer worth offering you, by way of pledge; but if my soul will be of any use to you, it is quite at your service. Suppose you send for an attorney forthwith, and let us see, gentlemen, what we can do." Insisting upon compliance, a notary was instantly sent for, whom the courteous

[1] It is curious to observe the manner in which the unknown authors of the "Novelle Antiche," the rudiments of Italian prose fiction, have, in many instances, selected historical names and characters on which to ground their imaginary narratives, for the purpose of giving them a local truth and interest, doubtless with the same view as our "great unknown" of the present day. However destitute of intrinsic excellence or historical correctness, these stories will be found, in the original, extremely valuable, as conveying a just idea of the rise of Italian language and Italian fiction in an age preceding, it is supposed, that of Dante. The English reader may here require to be informed that the old king is no other than Henry II.

[2] Beltramo, or Bertrand de Born, as well as his son, were, like King Richard, the Troubadours of their age. His "Rime" are still preserved in the Vatican Library, and many of his pieces have been recently published by M. Raynouard, in his "Poésies des Troubadours," vol. iv. Bertrand de Born was, in fact, alternately leagued with the rebellious sons of Henry II.; and after the death of Prince Henry, the son of that monarch, in 1183, was besieged in his little castle of Hauteford by the English king, and compelled to surrender. Henry, however, respected the friend of his deceased son, and restored Bertrand to the full enjoyment of his possessions. This incident is alluded to at the termination of the novel.

prince addressed in the following words: "Write, Mr. Attorney, and write quickly, lest it should be too late,—'I, Prince John, to wit of England, being *sound in mind*, but grievously sick in my body, do hereby will and bequeath my soul to perpetual purgatory, until all my creditors of all sums shall be paid and satisfied.'" Soon after uttering these words the obliging prince expired. The whole train of creditors then proceeded in a body with their petition to the king, who, instead of discharging the debts, flew into a violent passion with them, charging them *with* furnishing the prince with arms to rebel against his royal father. He, moreover, condemned them, under pain of forfeiture of their goods and persons, to leave his dominions speedily. One of the creditors, being so deeply implicated that he believed nothing *worse could happen to him*, here came forward, observing to the king: "But, sire, we shall not be losers in the end, inasmuch as we *have* got your *poor son's soul in* prison for his debts" "Ah, ah!" replied the king, "you are cunning fellows; how have you managed that?" They then handed to his majesty *a* copy of the *will*, *who*, on perusing it, assumed another tone, and after having consulted his father confessor, as well as his chancellor of the exchequer, returned to his *son's* creditors, who were rejoiced to hear him say, that it was not the will *of* Heaven that the soul of so brave a prince should remain in purgatory *for* his bills, which should be forthwith discharged. *Immediately afterwards* came Bertrand de Born, with his whole force, to submit to the pleasure of the king. "So!" cried his majesty, "I think *you are the man who* boasted you had more sense than all the world beside" "True, *my* liege," replied Bertrand, "but I have since *lost it* all." "*When was that?*" inquired his majesty. "Alas! my liege, when your noble *son* died, *I lost all I had in the world.*" The king perceiving that he spoke from the strong regard he bore the prince, not only pardoned, but *gave him* his liberty, and wherewithal to subsist *in decent* state.

NOVELLA XXIV.

THE LIBERAL MANNER IN WHICH THE SULTAN SALADIN BESTOWED TWO THOUSAND MARKS, AND HOW HIS TREASURER ENTERED IT IN HIS BOOKS.

THE Sultan Saladin was one of the noblest, the most valiant, and munificent princes that ever sat upon an Eastern throne[1] In one of his victorious battles, he took captive, *together* with many other noble

[1] The character *here drawn* of the *great Saladin* is similar to that given by Sozomeno, a writer of Pistoria, about the year *1194*, where he says, *Saladinus Soldanus vir magnificus, strenuus, largus* Many *other* great actions attributed *to* him are commemorated by the same author, as may be *gathered from* an edition of his works published at Florence, besides *the* testimony of several *contemporary* writers quoted by Tiraboschi and *Muratori* Saladin is said to have *risen from* the *lowest origin*; but his astonishing qualities *raised* him *to* the dignity of Sultan and king *of Egypt* *He* triumphed over Guido, king of Jerusalem, whom

prisoners, a French cavalier, who by his singular merits soon acquired the favour of the conqueror. While his companions remained in captivity, he was permitted to accompany the Sultan, nobly treated and apparelled, and consulted by him as a friend on many occasions Such was his master's affection towards him, that observing him one day apparently depressed in mind, he tenderly inquired into the reason. On entering into the Sultan's presence, the captive knight had appeared very thoughtful, and on this question being put, shaking his head sorrowfully, he declined giving any answer. But Saladin becoming more urgent, and repeating that he must be made acquainted with the truth, the cavalier replied: "Noble Sultan, I was thinking of my country and my friends." "Then since you no longer wish to stay with me," returned the Sultan, "you are free; you shall go to your country and to your friends." The captive bowed his head, but could not utter a word. The monarch then called his treasurer into his presence, and bade him count two thousand marks in silver, and place it to his captive friend's account. The treasurer immediately wrote down the sum, but his pen blotting it, he entered three thousand marks instead of the former sum, and handed it to the Sultan. "How, what have you done?" cried the latter. "I blotted the first entry," was the reply, "and I wished to mend it." "If that be the case," said the Sultan, "do not cancel anything I say, but write down four thousand: strange indeed if your pen should exceed the reach of mine!"

On another occasion the great Saladin, in the career of victory, proclaimed a truce between the Christian armies and his own. During this interval he visited the camp and the cities belonging to his enemies, with the design, should he approve of the customs and manners of the people, of embracing the Christian faith. He observed their tables spread with the finest damask coverings ready prepared for the feast, and he praised their magnificence. On entering the tents of the king of France during a festival, he was much pleased with the order and ceremony with which everything was conducted, and the courteous manner in which he feasted his nobles; but when he approached the residence of the poorer class, and perceived them devouring their miserable pittance upon the ground, he blamed the want of gratitude which permitted so many faithful followers of their chief to fare so much worse than the rest of their Christian brethren.

Afterwards several of the Christian leaders returned with the Sultan to observe the manners of the Saracens. They appeared much shocked on seeing all ranks of people take their meals sitting upon the ground. The Sultan led them into a grand pavilion where he feasted his court, surrounded with the most beautiful tapestries and rich foot-cloths, on which were wrought large embroidered figures of the cross. The Christian chiefs trampled them under their feet with the utmost indifference, and even rubbed their boots and spat upon them.

he made prisoner, and possessed himself of his dominions Dante, in the fourth canto of the *Inferno*, says,

"E solo in parte vidi il Saladino,"

distinguishing him as eminently soaring above the baseness of his birth and country

On perceiving this, the Sultan turned towards them in the greatest anger, exclaiming: "And do you, who pretend to preach the cross, treat it thus ignominiously?[1] Gentlemen, I am shocked at your conduct. Am I to suppose from this that the worship of your Deity consists only in words, not in actions? Neither your manners nor your conduct please me;" and on this he dismissed them, breaking off the truce and commencing hostilities more warmly than before.

NOVELLA XXX.

ANECDOTE OF A CERTAIN TALE-TELLER IN THE SERVICE OF MESSER AZZOLINO.[2]

MESSER AZZOLINO was in the habit of listening to one of his *Novellatori*, or story-tellers, previous to going to rest. It happened that one evening the *Novellatore*, as well as his master, felt a great inclination to go to sleep, just as he was commanded to furnish one of his best stories For want of a better, the weary fabulist began to relate the adventures of a certain grazier, who went to market with the whole of his earnings, about two hundred pieces, for the purpose of purchasing sheep, obtaining at least two for a single piece. Returning with his stock in the evening to his farm, he found the river he had crossed so swollen with the rains, that he was greatly puzzled in what way to get them across it. In this dilemma he observed not far off a poor fisherman with a little boat, so small that it would only carry one sheep and the grazier at a passage. So he jumped in with a single fleece, and began to row with all his might. The river was broad, but he rowed and he rowed away. . . . Here the fabulist came to a full stop and nodded. "Well, and what then?" cried his master; "get on, sirrah; what next?" "Why," replied the drowsy story-teller, "let him get over the remainder of the sheep, and then I will proceed; for it will take him a year at least, and in the meantime your excellency may enjoy a very comfortable slumber." And again he nodded his head.

[1] This practice of *preaching the* cross, and everywhere exposing it to the insults of the people, so humorously touched upon by the Sultan, has been likewise seriously treated of by a Tuscan pen, not many years ago

[2] The Messer Azzolino here alluded to is not the same who in those times was made Podestà of Arezzo, under the name of Azzolino d' Arringario degli Azzi d' Arezzo, in the year 1270, it is the tyrant Ezzelino da Romano, or d' Arezzo, as he is variously denominated by the seigniories which belonged to him, and who made himself so terrible both to friends and foes by his revolting and sanguinary actions. Yet we are to suppose, that in the intervals of his ferocious exploits, when satiated with cruelty and revenge, he could still indulge himself in the more soothing pastime of listening to the adventures related by the wandering jongleurs and troubadours, or those of his sleepy jester This story is taken from the eleventh tale of Petrus Alphonsus, and is introduced in "Don Quixote," as being related by Sancho to his master (Part I b iii c 6) Dunlop's "History of Fiction," vol ii. p 217

NOVELLA XXXI.

CONCERNING THE VALIANT DEEDS OF RICCAR LOGHERICO DEL ILLA.

RICCAR LOGHERICO, the lord of Illa, was one of the richest gentlemen in Provence, and a man of singular intrepidity and prowess in every feat of arms. When the Saracens made a descent upon Spain, he was present at that terrible engagement which, from its sanguinary nature, and its grand results, is known under the name of *La Spagnata*,[1] unequalled, it is supposed, in ferocity, by any battle fought since the time of the Greeks and Trojans. The Moors bore down upon their enemies with an overwhelming force, amidst the clang of warlike instruments, and bands of troops of various nations. Riccar Logherico was the leader of the van of the Christian army, and when he found his squadrons recoil in their charge, owing to the terrific music of the Moorish bands, he commanded his cavaliers to turn their horses' cruppers round towards the enemy, and to back them until they came close enough to make a cruel charge. When they found themselves approaching into the midst of the hostile squadrons, they suddenly wheeled about, and facing them, furiously dashed into the thickest of the battle, dealing their blows on all sides, until the Moors were completely put to the rout.

On another occasion, when the Count of Toulouse was arrayed in battle against the Count of Proenza, as they approached to action, the valiant Riccar was observed to give his steed to his squire, and to mount a strong mule. The Count inquired into the reason, saying: "What now, good Riccar, what are you about?" "I merely wish to show, my Lord, that I come here neither to pursue nor to fly. I will kill no man behind his back, nor flee from any man's face. That flighty beast will run away, but my mule will stand his ground." And herein he evinced his noble nature no less than his great prowess, in which he surpassed every other cavalier of his age.

NOVELLA XLIV.

THE NOVEL WAY IN WHICH A CAVALIER RECOMMENDED HIMSELF TO THE LADY HE ADMIRED.[2]

A CERTAIN knight was one day entreating a lady whom he loved to smile upon his wishes, and among other delicate arguments which he

[1] *La Spagnata*, or the Spanish fight, a name given it by the people in commemoration of the feats of arms performed there

[2] The suitor here mentioned was Messer Rinieri da Calvoli, of whom the greatest of Italy's poets makes mention in the fourteenth canto of his *Purgatorio*

Questi è Rinier, questi è 'l pregio, e l' onore
Della Casa da Calboli, ove nullo
Fatto s' è reda poi del suo valore

pressed upon her was that of his own superior wealth, elegance, and accomplishments, especially when compared with the merits of her own liege lord, "whose extreme ugliness, madam," he continued, "I think I need not insist upon." Her husband, who overheard this compliment from the place of his concealment, immediately replied, "Pray, sir, mend your own manners, and do not vilify other people." The name of the plain gentleman was Sicio di Val Buona, and Messer Rinieri da Calvoli that of the other.

NOVELLA XLIX.

CONCERNING AN ALARM-BELL INSTITUTED IN THE TIME OF KING GIOVANNI.

In the reign of King Giovanni d'Atri, there was ordered to be erected a certain great bell for the especial use of individuals who might happen to meet with any grievous injuries, when they were to ring as loud as they could, for the purpose of obtaining redress. Now it so fell out that the rope in the course of time was nearly worn away, on which a bunch of snakeweed had been fastened to it, for the convenience of the ringers. One day a fine old courser belonging to a knight of Atri, which being no longer serviceable, had been turned out to run at large, was wandering near the place. Being hard pressed by famine, the poor steed seized hold of the snakeweed with his mouth, and sounded the bell pretty smartly. The council, on hearing the clamour, immediately assembled, as if to hear the petition of the horse, whose appearance seemed to declare that he required justice. Taking the case into consideration, it was soon decreed that the same cavalier whom the horse had so long served while he was young should be compelled to maintain him in his old age; and the king even imposed a fine in similar instances to the same effect.[1]

[1] *The Cav* Saba da Castiglione mentions a like incident, and an account of it is also contained in a pleasing little Italian work, whose antiquity deprives us of the name of the author, in which it is stated that the bell was placed in the middle of a church in Atri, a noble city of Abruzzo, where the steed sought shelter, and from the same motive began to sound the bell In addition to this instance of gratitude on the part of the council of Atri, other and real proofs are not wanting in various cities of Italy of the high esteem in which true knights have held the virtues of their chargers There are three bronze figures with public inscriptions in Florence A mule is commemorated by Luca Pitti, for his obstinate good qualities, in the Court of the Palazzo de' Pitti; and the statue of a horse, which belonged to the Venetian ambassador Carlo Capello, is raised near the Piazza, on the side of the river Arno, by the menage of San Marco.

NOVELLA LVI.

SOME ACCOUNT OF A GENTLEMAN WHOM THE EMPEROR CAUSED TO BE HANGED.

THE Emperor Frederic had one day occasion to order the execution of a certain gentleman for some heinous offence. In order the better to preserve the ends of justice, he selected an officer of great authority to keep watch over the body of the culprit, exposed for the sake of example, lest by his friends it should be carried away. These being actually on the watch, and the officer remiss in his duty, so it turned out to be the case. When he found the body was missing, he began to be afraid, lest, in his sovereign's anger, who had imposed the heaviest penalty on such a fault, he might be compelled to occupy the lost man's place. In this dilemma he resolved, after much consideration, to apply at a neighbouring abbey, desirous, if possible, of obtaining another dead body in the place of that he had lost. Arriving during the same night at the wished-for spot, he perceived before he entered a certain lady[1] weeping bitterly, with her hair flying all abroad, lamenting the death of her dear husband who had died only that day. This was just what the unlucky knight wanted, and he straightway accosted her in the most polite terms, inquiring what was the matter. The lady on this replied: "Alas! I loved him so tenderly! No, I shall never be reconciled to my loss; I will weep and no one shall comfort me." "Why," returned the cavalier, "what strange, what absurd conduct is this? You may die of grief, my poor lady, but will your husband return again to life the sooner, think you, for that? He hears not, he cares not for you; and will a woman of sense, like you, continue thus foolishly to bewail what cannot be helped? I will tell you what you had far better do: take me for your husband in his place, and let me put him in the place of somebody else I have lost. I have no wife, and besides I am in extreme danger, and cannot tell what to do. I was set to watch over the body of an unfortunate gentleman just hanged, yet who has some way escaped out of my hands; no thanks to his relations! and I suppose I shall be fixed upon to supply his place. In the name of heaven, madam, let us prevent this, and I will become the kindest and most indulgent husband to you in the world." At these words the lady suddenly became enamoured of the good knight, saying in a submissive tone: "Indeed I will do anything you command me, and I am far from being insensible to the love you bear me. Come, let us remove the body of my poor dear husband to the place you wish; he is buried

[1] The same lady, tearing her hair and beating her breast, yet so easily consoled for the loss of her husband, is likewise to be found in Lorenzo Astemio di Macerata, Hecatomythum, *De viduâ, quæ operarium suum sibi conjugio copulavit* One would almost imagine that with a change of the name and period, it had been taken from a fable of the ancient Æsop, could we suppose him to have been accessible to the author at that period Mr Dunlop observes that this story, the same as that of the Widow of Ephesus, originally written by Petronius Arbiter, probably came to the author of the "Cento Novelle Antiche" through the medium of the "Seven Wise Masters."—*History of Fiction*, vol. ii p 219

just by, and we can put him in the stead of the gentleman you have just lost." She then dried her tears, and assisted her intended spouse to bring the body from the grave, and suspend it by the neck in the very same way the real culprit had been executed. "But he had two teeth," cried the cavalier, "wanting in his upper jaw, and I know the body will be inspected narrowly! Oh! what shall I do?" "Do you think," cried the lady in the softest tone, "we could not break two of his teeth?" and two of his teeth were speedily knocked out; and so pleased was she with the appearance of her knight, that she would have slit the ears of the old gentleman likewise, had he requested her Now, observing the manner in which she treated her husbands when she had done with them, the officer began seriously to reflect on the propriety of fulfilling the conditions, saying: "Madam, if you really think so little of the person whom you profess to love so much, what would you do with me in the like case?" And he left her overwhelmed with rage and vexation.

NOVELLA LVII.

WE ARE HERE INFORMED HOW CHARLES OF ANJOU LOVED FOR THE SAKE OF LOVE.[1]

CHARLES the celebrated king of Sicily, when he was formerly Count of Anjou, had the unhappiness to be deeply smitten with the beauty of the Contessa di Zeti, who on her part was as passionately enamoured of the Conte d'Universa. It happened that about the same period the king of France had forbidden, under penalty both of goods and person, the practice of tourney tilting throughout all his dominions. Now the Count of Anjou being very desirous of proving whether he or the Conte d'Universa were the better knight, had recourse to the assistance of his friend Messer Alardo di Valleri, beseeching him, with many entreaties, to apply for leave from the king to hold a single tourney, as he was determined to enter the lists against the Conte d'Universa at all hazards.

His friend Alardo then inquired in what way he thought he should proceed to obtain permission; and the Count directed him in the following words: "You know the king is now grown very devout, and such is his regard for you that not long since he was very nearly going into holy orders, and making you go too, for the sole pleasure

[1] Charles, the brother of king Louis XI of France, was in love with the Countess of Anjou, but then of Zeti, being himself at that time Count of Anjou. In the year 1263, Pope Urban IV proclaimed him king of Sicily and Puglia, anterior to the period, here stated, of his chivalric attachment For when he obtained the crown of Sicily, in 1265, he had already been united to the daughter of Count Berlinghieri of Provence His father, St Louis, had strictly prohibited the celebration of tournaments throughout his dominions, so that he was comptlled thus artfully to extort from the Saint permission to engage in a single tourney. We hav mention of the redoubted person of M Alardo in a line of Dante, which is as follows:

Ove senz' arme vinse il vecchio Alardo.

of having your company. So say nothing about me; but ask it as a particular favour to yourself, that he will just let you break a spear or two before you die, and in everything else you will always be at his majesty's commands." "But," said Messer Alardo, "do not you think, Count, I shall be banished out of our chivalric company, drummed out of the regiment, and all for a single tourney?" "Trouble not your head about that," replied the Count; "I give you the word of a true knight that you shall run no risks." The knight then promised to proceed with the affair as directed, and walked out boldly to seek the king. "My good liege," said M. Alardo, as he entered the king's presence, "when I embraced the cause of arms, the day you were crowned, I think some of the best knights that ever mounted steeds were present. Now as I intend, out of compliance to your wishes, to retire shortly from the world, and assume the priest's cowl for a helm-piece, I have to entreat that your majesty will indulge me in one of my last worldly wishes, which is, to proclaim a little tournament, that I may once more try my mettle among the gay cavaliers here, and thus yield up my sword with decency where I first unsheathed it, amidst the pomp and revelry of your court." The king granted the knight's request with the utmost courtesy, and a grand tournament was accordingly proclaimed.

On one side gathered the followers of the Conte d'Universa, on the other those belonging to Anjou. The queen, with the chief beauties of the court, in all the glow of youth and pleasure, were present at the scene. The lodges, the balustrades, and the whole surrounding field seemed animated with joy and love, while the air rang with music, as the ladies, led by the Contessa di Zeti, took their seats. When a number of spears had been already broken, the two Counts of Anjou and Universa cast their eyes upon each other, and unable to restrain their rivalry, ordered the ground to be staked out, and their heralds to sound a charge. At the same moment they sprang forward to the shock, with the full force of their fiery steeds, their lances levelled at each other's breasts. Just as he had reached the middle of the ring, the charger of the Conte d'Universa fell with him, and both came together to the ground. Many of the nearest ladies, and among them the Contessa di Zeti, hastily left their lodge, and courteously assisted the Count to rise, the latter giving him her arm, and conducting him kindly to a seat.

On observing this, the Count d'Anjou began to complain bitterly that he had not had the same good fortune, exclaiming, "Alas! my noble steed, why didst thou not fall headlong like that clumsy beast, and bring the sweet Countess to my side, walking, alas! as she now walks there with him!"

After the tournament was concluded, the Count d'Anjou went to the queen, and begged, as an especial favour, that she would consent to wear the semblance of being piqued with her royal lord, and that afterwards, making the reconciliation of love, she would insist on his first consenting to grant her one thing, which was to be, that he would not deprive the young cavaliers of France of the glorious society of their famed friend, Messer Alardo di Valleri.

The queen very graciously did exactly as she was requested; for she picked a quarrel with his majesty, and on making it up again, required the above-mentioned terms. These the king also promised her; and M. Alardo was thus released from his promise of becoming a saint, long remaining a member of the chivalric brotherhood of the kingdom, celebrated for his wonderful prowess even among the chief nobles, and no less esteemed for his singular virtues than for his courage.

NOVELLA LX.

THE GOOD KING MELIADUS AND THE KNIGHT WITHOUT FEAR.

THE good King Meliadus and the Knight without Fear were mortal enemies to each other in the field. The cavalier being upon one of his secret undertakings, happened to meet with some of his own squires, who, unable to recognise him, though they had the utmost regard for their master, thus accosted him: "Now, Sir Knight, tell us, on the faith of your chivalry, whether is the Knight without Fear or the good King Meliadus the better sword?" "Why, squires," replied the cavalier, "so may Heaven grant me fair adventure, the good king, I think, is the best knight that ever pressed a steed."

His squires, who bore the King Meliadus no good-will, out of the love they felt for their own lord, expressing at all times their abhorrence of the king, now fell unawares upon their master, and traitorously making him their prisoner, placed him, armed as he was, across the back of a poor palfrey, saying among each other that they would take him and have him hanged.

As they went along their way, however, they fell in with the King Meliadus, who was also proceeding in the disguise of a wandering knight to a certain tournament, in full equipment for the joust. As he passed, he thus addressed the squires: "And why do you wish to hang this cavalier, gentlemen? who is he, that you should use him thus vilely?" To this they replied "Because he has well deserved to die, and if you knew why as well as we, you would execute him at once. Convict him of his own fault out of his own mouth, if you please!" The king then approached the captive knight, saying: "What have you been guilty of, that these fellows should treat you thus ignominiously?" "I have done nothing," replied the cavalier, "nothing but telling them the simple truth." "How?" exclaimed the king, "that is hardly possible! Let me hear what you have really done?" "Most willingly, sir," replied the captive. "I was proceeding on my way, in the guise of a simple knight-errant, when I met with these squires, who inquired of me, on the faith of chivalry, whether the good King Meliadus or the Cavalier without Fear were the better knight. Always desirous that the truth should prevail, I declared that the King Meliadus was the best; in which I meant to speak the

truth, although the same king is one of the bitterest enemies I have in the field. I bear him the deepest hatred and defiance, and yet I spoke the truth. This is the whole of my offence, and for this I am punished as you see." The King Meliadus directly fell upon the squires, and quickly dispersing them, unbound the captive cavalier, mounting him upon a rich charger, and presenting him with his coat of arms, which were, however, concealed, entreating him not to behold them until he had reached his destination. They then each went their several ways, as well as the squires. The cavalier, when he dismounted at his quarters, raised the covering of his saddle and found the arms of King Meliadus, who had thus rescued him from his own squires, although his mortal enemy.

NOVELLA LXXII.

THE SULTAN, BEING IN WANT OF MONEY, ENDEAVOURS TO FIND MEANS OF EXTORTING IT FROM A JEW.[1]

THE Sultan, finding himself at a loss for money, was persuaded by some of the courtiers to seek occasion of quarrelling with a rich Jew who had amassed considerable wealth in his dominions The Israelite was immediately summoned to appear before him, when the Sultan insisted upon his informing him which he believed to be the best creed in the world, flattering himself that if he should prefer that of Moses, he might inflict upon him a heavy fine, and if he should declare for Mahomet's, he would accuse him of professing the Jewish, as he was known to do. But the wary Israelite replied to the question in the following manner · "You must know, great Sultan, there was once a father who had three sons, each of whom had frequently entreated him to bestow upon him a large diamond ring which he possessed, set round with other precious gems ; and each was so very pressing, that, desirous of obliging them all three, the father sent for a goldsmith to attend him without loss of time. 'Do you think,' said the father, 'you could make me two rings exactly resembling this in appearance?' which the goldsmith promised, and equally well performed. No one being acquainted with his intentions, he sent severally for each of the youths, presenting him, under promise of keeping it secret, with one of the rings, which each of them esteemed the real diamond, and no one knew the truth except the father himself. And thus do I confess, great Sultan, that neither do I pretend to know it, being unable to throw the least light upon a secret which is known only to the Father of all." The Sultan, on receiving this unexpected answer, had nothing further to urge, and was compelled, for want of a reason to the contrary, to let the Jew go where he pleased.

[1] We find the same story improved upon by the elegant Boccaccio himself (*vide* Giorno i Nov. iii p 73) Nor is this by any means a solitary instance in which he has drawn his subjects from these rude specimens of early Italian fiction.

NOVELLA LXXV.[1]

AN ACCOUNT OF THE GREAT SLAUGHTER MADE BY KING RICHARD IN BATTLE AGAINST THE SARACENS.

THE good King Richard, surnamed Lion-heart, set out on an expedition over seas with a vast train of barons, the most doughty knights and cavaliers of every rank, all taking ship for the Holy Land, and all consisting of foot. When in the presence of the Sultan's army, King Richard, leading on his men, soon made such dreadful havoc among the Saracens, that the nurses used to say to the infants, when they chid them, "Be quiet, or King Richard will hear you:" for he was as dreadful in their eyes as death itself. It is said that the Sultan, on seeing the rout of his finest troops, cried out, "How many are those Christians who thus deal with my people?" And when he was told that there were only King Richard with his English axemen and archers, and the whole on foot, he added, "It is a scandal to our Prophet that so brave a man as King Richard should be seen to fight on foot, bear him my noblest charger." And a steed was instantly after the battle despatched to the king's tent, with a message from the Sultan that he trusted he should no longer behold him fight on foot. Casting his eye upon the horse, Richard commanded one of his squires to mount him, to observe his paces. The squire found him very hard in the mouth, and in a short time, losing his command over him, he was borne full speed into the Sultan's camp, who came forward expecting to greet King Richard. The king very wisely, by this contrivance, escaped, and showed how imprudent it always is to confide in the good offices of an enemy.

1 Though there is, perhaps, little historical authority for the incident here reported to have taken place between the lion-hearted Richard and his foe, it is by no means an improbable one For though Sir Walter Scott has been polite enough to present his majesty with a coal-black steed in "Ivanhoe," it is generally known that the British Lion was accustomed to engage his enemies on his feet, and why should not the Sultan, as well as Sir Walter, present him with a horse? We subjoin the following portion of the canzone, in which the hero laments his captivity in Germany.

Or sachan ben mos homs, e mos barons
Angles, Normans, Peytasins, e Gascons,
Qu' yeu non ay ia si paûre compagnon
Que per aver lou laissesse en prison

Yet know full well, my chiefs of every land,
Proud English, Normans, Gascons, Poitiers' band,
I would not leave the poorest of their train
To linger thus his prison-hours in pain

The whole of the original, with a translation, may be seen in Burney's "History of Music," vol ii. p 238.

NOVELLA LXXXI.

WE HERE LEARN HOW THE LADY OF SCALOT DIED FOR LOVE OF LAUNCELOT OF THE LAKE.

A DAUGHTER of the great Barbassoro became passionately attached to Launcelot of the Lake; but so far from returning her love, he bestowed all his affections on the fair Queen Ginevra. To such a degree did her unhappy attachment arise, that she at length fell a victim to it, and died, leaving a bequest that, as soon as her soul had departed, her body should be transported on board a barge fitted up for the purpose, with a rich couch, and adorned with velvet stuffs and precious stones and ornaments; and thus arrayed in her proudest attire, with a bright golden crown upon her brows, she was to be borne alone to the place of residence of her beloved. Beneath her silver zone was found a letter to the following tenor; but we must first mention what ought to precede the letter itself. Everything was exactly fulfilled as she had appointed, respecting the vessel without a sail or oars, helmsman, or hands to guide her; and so, with its lifeless freight, it was launched upon the open waves. Thus she was borne along by the winds, which conveyed her direct to Camalot, where the barge rested of itself upon the banks.

A rumour immediately spread through the court, and a vast train of barons and cavaliers ran out of the palace, followed soon by King Arthur himself. They stood mute with astonishment on observing the strange vessel there, without a voice or a hand to stir her out of the dead calm in which she lay. The king was the first to set his foot upon her side, and he there beheld the gentle lady surrounded with the pomp of death. He too first unclasped the zone, and cast his eye over the letter, directed—"To all the Knights of the Round Table, greeting, from the poor lady of Scalot, who invokes long health and fortune for the proudest lances of the world. Do they wish to learn how I am thus fearfully brought before them? Let my last hand witness that it was at once for the sake of the noblest and vilest of the cavaliers of the land—for the proud knight, Launcelot of the Lake. For neither tears nor sighs of mine availed with him to have compassion on my love. And thus, alas! you behold me dead,—fallen a victim only for loving too true."

NOVELLA LXXXII.

HOW A CERTAIN HERMIT, ON HIS WAY THROUGH A FOREST, FOUND A GREAT TREASURE, AND WHAT ENSUED.

A GENTLE hermit one day proceeding on his way through a vast forest, chanced to discover a large cave nearly hidden under ground. Being

greatly fatigued, he entered to repose himself a while, and observing something shine brightly in the distance, he approached, and found it was a heap of gold. At the sight of the glittering bait he turned away, and hastening through the forest again as fast as possible, he had the further misfortune to fall into the hands of three fierce robbers, always on the watch to despoil the unwary travellers who might pass that way. But, though inmates of the forest, they had never yet discovered the treasure from which the hermit now fled. The thieves on first perceiving him thus strangely flying, without any one in pursuit, were seized with a sort of unaccountable dread, though, at the same time, they ventured forward to ascertain the cause On approaching to inquire, the hermit, without relaxing his pace, answered, "I flee from death, who is urging me sorely behind." The robbers, unable to perceive any one, cried out, "Show us where he is, or take us to the place instantly." The hermit therefore replied, in a hurried voice, "Follow me, then," and proceeded towards the grotto. He there pointed out to them the fatal place, beseeching them, at the same time, to abstain from even looking at it, as they had far better do as he had done, and avoid it. But the thieves, resolving to know what strange thing it was which had alarmed him, only bade him lead the way · which, being in terror of his life, the hermit quickly did; and showing them the heap of gold, "Here," he said, "is the death which was in pursuit of me," and the thieves, suddenly seizing upon the treasure, began to rejoice exceedingly.

They afterwards permitted the good man to proceed upon his way, amusing themselves when he was gone with ridiculing his absurd conduct. The three robbers, guarding the gold in their possession, began to consider in what way they should employ it. One of them observed, "Since Heaven has bestowed such good fortune upon us, we ought by no means to leave the place for a moment without bearing the whole of it along with us." "No," replied another, "it appears to me we had better not do so; but let one of us take a small portion, and set out to buy wine and viands at the city, besides many other things he may think we are in want of;" and to this the other two consented

Now the great demon, who is very ingenious and busy on these occasions to effect as much mischief as possible, directly began to deal with the one fixed upon to furnish provisions from the city. "As soon," whispered the devil to him, "as I shall have reached the city, I will eat and drink of the best of everything, as much as I please, and then purchase what I want. Afterwards I will mix with the food I intend for my companions something which I trust will settle their account, thus becoming sole master of the whole of the treasure, which will make me one of the richest men in this part of the world;" and as he purposed to do, so he did.

He carried the poisoned food to his companions, who, on their part, while he had been away, had come to the conclusion of killing him on his return, in order that they might divide the booty between themselves, saying, "Let us fall upon him the moment he comes, and afterwards eat what he has brought, and divide the money between

us in much larger shares than before." The robber who had been at the city now returned with the articles he had bought, when the other two instantly pierced his body with their lances, and despatched him with their knives. They then began to feast upon the provisions prepared for them, and upon satiating their appetite, both soon after were seized with violent pangs, and fell dead upon the ground. In this manner all three fell victims to each other's avarice and cruelty, without obtaining their ill-gotten wealth; a striking proof of the judgment of Heaven upon traitors; for, attempting to compass the death of others, they justly incurred their own. The poor hermit thus wisely fled from the gold, which remained without a single claimant.

Novels of Boccaccio.



FROM THE DECAMERÓN.

GIOVANNI BOCCACCIO.

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THE voluminous notices contained in the writings of Villani, of Manni, and of Mazzuchelli, together with those prefixed to the various editions of the "Decameron,"[1] relating to the life of this distinguished Florentine, render it quite unnecessary to enter here into any very detailed view of the subject. So many extracts from these have, moreover, appeared in the English language, that it may be deemed sufficient to refer such readers as feel more particularly interested to those more enlarged sources of information; not omitting to mention some judicious remarks from the pen of Mr. Dunlop.[2] A brief and rapid sketch of the chief incidents in the life of this *facile princeps* of Italian novelists will be all that the translator now presumes to offer on the subject. And even in this, it has been his object wholly to confine himself to the more essential points connected with the character and productions of one of the great masters of the Tuscan language: one who, with the happy audacity of true genius, first ventured to adopt and bring into repute the *lingua volgare* of his country.

Boccaccio was born at Florence in the year 1313. His family was from Certaldo, a village in the Valdelsa, about twenty miles from Florence, a place from which his father derived his patronymic of Da Certaldo. He was a reputable merchant, and early apprenticed his son Giovanni to the same business. Of his mother there is little known, beyond what we learn from the author's contemporary, Villani, to whom much credit is seldom due, who mentions her as a Parisian lady of middle rank, to whom Boccaccio's father became passionately attached during one of his commercial visits to the French capital. It is generally agreed, however, that their son Giovanni was born without the pale of wedlock, a fact which further appears from a Papal dispensation having been granted at Avignon permitting our author, though illegitimate, to assume the ecclesiastical habit.

Of the early development of his genius in the career in which it was destined to reach such unrivalled excellence we have some account in the novelist's own words:—"I well remember," he observes, "that

[1] *Historia del Decameron*, Florence, 4to, 1742. Villani, *Lives of Illustrious Florentines*, 4to, Venice. *Vita del Boccaccio*, by Squarciafico,—by Lodovico Dolce,—by Sansovino,—by Massone, Bayle, Betussi, &c. Prefaces to the various editions of Florence, Venice, &c.
[2] Dunlop's "History of Fiction," vol. ii. p. 222.

excessive study. He was interred in the Church of SS. Jacopo and Filippo at Certaldo, the birthplace and the sepulchre of his family.

Although the author of various compositions, as well in the Latin as in the Tuscan language, which he so beautifully modelled to his purpose, Boccaccio's reputation chiefly rests upon the "Decameron," a work written in the maturity of his powers It was composed soon after the year 1348, rendered remarkable by the great pestilence which desolated Florence Of this he himself informs us in his introductory discourse, which may be said to vie with the appalling descriptions handed down to us by Thucydides and Lucretius of the same dreadful malady; such is the force and vividness of its colouring At what period the work was brought to a conclusion does not appear, though, as far as we can now learn, it was chiefly composed at Fiesole, delightfully situated near Florence, where he is believed to have passed much of his time. That the author himself considered it in the light of a laborious undertaking, is clear from his repeated mention of it towards the conclusion, where he terms it "una lunga fatica."

Perhaps the beauty and eloquence of the language of the "Decameron," or "Ten Days' Relation of Tales," are entitled to still higher praise than the invention or the interest of the stories it contains. In this view it stands unrivalled, and the respective merits of subsequent imitators are best estimated in proportion as they approach the ease and elegance of their model. When this standard was once abandoned, the language fell into comparative barbarism, and it is with difficulty we recognise, in some of the novelists of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the successors of the great Boccaccio.

In tracing the origin of many of the tales in the "Decameron," some will be found to be of an historical, some of a fictitious, and others of a mixed character. A few are modelled on the "Novelle Antiche," and on materials still more remote, whose origin it is now impossible to ascertain In general, those derived from the East, and from the French Fabliaux, may, perhaps, be pronounced the most ingenious and pleasing. But, however much indebted to the Northern Trouveurs, Boccaccio and his successors gathered little from the Troubadours of the South, to whom the poets of Italy owed so much of their reputation.

The series of novels entitled, "Il Decamerone" has also frequently appeared under the name of "Il Principe Galeotto," derived, it is supposed, from a similar interesting production, thus entitled, whose attractions are celebrated by Dante, as having fostered the unhappy loves of Paulo and Francesca:

"Galeotto fu il libro e chi lo scrisse," &c.

In the "Decameron" we possess the first collection of Italian tales, following the "Cento Novelle Antiche," not later than half a century, though the progress during that time, in the taste and language of Italy, is truly astonishing, such at least as the genius of Boccaccio can alone account for. To convey an idea of this, it will be sufficient to remark upon the improvement which took place in our own language between the intervening periods of Gower and Chaucer and

our early English dramatists: nor do we think that in such a comparison we are going much beyond the point.

In his use of the *lingua volgare*, indeed, Boccaccio would appear to have outstripped his age, and acquired, as if by intuition, the polished ease and freedom of an Augustan era; after which, at no distant period, the language underwent a decline. From his talents, his knowledge of life, and the various scenes in which he had been engaged, from which many of his incidents are drawn, no one could have come better prepared for the accomplishment of the arduous task of becoming at once the framer of his fictions and of the language in which they were written. Eastern, Grecian, Roman, and chivalric sources were alike resorted to, no less for purposes of fable than for the language affording new terms of art. To these were likewise added the early historical materials of his own country. Still it is maintained by some that the chief portion of the tales in the "Decameron" are entirely of the author's own invention; and there are certainly many in which no traces of their origin can be discovered.

Doubtless, many are of this nature, in which we meet with real historical names; from which it has been argued by Manni and other Italian critics, that the incidents related are themselves true. This opinion is combated by the ingenious author of the "History of Fiction,"[1] so far supporting Boccaccio's claim to their pure invention; and we think he combats it with success. "Manni," says Mr. Dunlop, "appears to have thought that if he could discover that a merchant of a certain name existed at a certain period, the tale related concerning him must have had a historical foundation." But though this would appear to have escaped the observation of the Italian editor of the "Decameron," it is nevertheless probable that many incidents both of a private and historical character, which we meet with in the work, though no longer upon record, may really have occurred during the author's own times, however much they may have been modified by him to suit his purpose.

Among these, and not the least amusing of this character, are such as exhibit the immoralities and abuses of the clerical orders, with much of the spirit of our old English satirists, though under the finer veil of prose fiction, and with less bitter invective than we find in the Vision of Piers Plowman, or indeed in any work from the times of Gower and Chaucer to those of Withers and Donne.

The boldness of all these secular writers, at so early a period, is at first calculated to excite surprise, until we come to reflect that, however severe against the avowal of heretical opinions, it was one of the indulgences of the Holy Church to overlook and even to listen to the scurrility and abuse of its more witty children, as long as they took care to preserve, as was often the case with the most outrageous of these satirists, an outward conformity to its doctrines. And thus we perceive that Boccaccio himself entered into holy orders before he died; while many a truly religious heretic afterwards probably sealed his faith at the stake. It is the want of this consideration which

[1] Mr Dunlop's "History of Fiction," vol ii. pp. 224, 225

appears so frequently to perplex the critics and commentators on the lives of many of the early authors; but it is an apparent contradiction, easily in this way explained.

Such were the freedoms taken by the authors of the Fabliaux, of Piers Plowman, and, in particular, in many of Chaucer's tales, such as that of the Sompnour; and by Jean de Meun, where he introduces Faux Semblant, habited as a monk, in his "Roman de la Rose."[1] In all these the wandering friars are held up to the scorn and derision of the people. But in the hands of Boccaccio, we find this species of satire contained rather in the incidents and adventures of his heroes than in his moral reflections; and it is often so finely and intimately inwrought with his descriptions, that we have to gather it rather from inference than from observation. The charm of his language is likewise so great, that it was sufficient to have disarmed the Pope and his satellites, and his easy and graceful way of saying the harshest things was calculated, with the power of the enchanted spear, at once to wound and to heal.

The simple and natural manner of his introductions is by no means the least triumph of Boccaccio's genius: that which in all other writers is esteemed the most difficult, induces his readers to pursue the subject, and to regret its close. His characters are always perfect of their sort, admirably in keeping, and fitted to the scenes in which they engage. There is also an airy and buoyant spirit about them truly refreshing; and this, even when contrasted with the scenes of misery and desolation around them, has something in it not unpleasing; nor is it improbable in the circumstances in which they are. The period chosen, the descriptions of the surrounding scenery, the manner in which they meet to relate their stories, which the ladies and their companions take in turn, are in the highest degree natural. The following selections will be found sufficient, it is hoped, to convey a pretty just idea of the varied powers possessed by our unequalled novelist—

"From grave to gay, from sprightly to severe;"

in which pictures of rural beauty and repose are succeeded by the sombre and terrific scenes of jealousy, hatred, or revenge.

SECOND DAY, NOVELLA IV.

The country bordering on the sea-coast on the way from Reggio to Gaeta has ever been esteemed the most delightful region of Italy, and that part of it near to Salerno, which looks direct upon the sea, and which the inhabitants call the coast of Malfi, is full of small towns, gardens, and fountains, and abounds in trade and merchandise. In

[1] Dunlop's "History of Fiction," vol ii. p 228

one of these towns, called Ravello, many rich men are still to be found, and not long since a very wealthy man dwelt there, named Landolfo Ruffolo, who not being content with the riches he had acquired, but coveting to double them, was in danger of losing both his fortune and his life together. This man, after the custom of merchants, having made his calculations, purchased a large ship, and lading her with an assortment of merchandise, sailed to the Isle of Cyprus. When, however, he arrived there with his cargo, he found a number of vessels which had anticipated him with goods of the same description as his own; in consequence of which he was not only obliged to sell his cargo at a cheap rate, but almost to give it away, to his great loss and mortification. Whereupon grieving exceedingly, and not knowing what to do, seeing himself thus suddenly reduced from a state of affluence to low poverty, he resolved to die, or to indemnify himself for his losses on other people, rather than to return home a beggar, after having always maintained the rank of a wealthy man. Having found a purchaser for his own ship, he with the money arising from it, and from the proceeds of his merchandise, purchased a small swift-sailing brigantine, well calculated for a pirate vessel, which he fitted up with everything requisite for a service of that nature. He now began to capture the vessels of other merchants, but particularly of the Turks, and fortune in this enterprise favoured him more than she had done in his mercantile adventures. In the space of one year he had robbed and taken so much from the Turks, that he was not only indemnified for the loss of all his merchandise, but his wealth was wholly doubled. Finding his misfortunes thus liberally requited, and being now content, and thinking it would be folly to hazard this second fortune, he concluded on returning home, and resolved not to risk his money in the purchase of any more merchandise, but to return in the same vessel in which he had repaired his losses. He accordingly ordered his men to put forth their oars with all expedition. When they were now in the mid-ocean, a gale arose which was not only contrary to their course, but caused such a dreadful sea, that the small boat being unable to live in it, they made all haste to land, and in the expectation of a more friendly wind entered a little port in a small island, and there sheltered themselves. A little time after, two great carracks of Genoa, on their return from Constantinople, driven by the same storm, also sought a refuge in the same port. The people on board the latter seeing the owner's name, and hearing him to be very rich, blocked up her passage; and as men are naturally addicted to covet after money and spoil, they resolved to make her their own as a prize at sea. Landing, therefore, some of their men, well armed with crossbows and other weapons, they prevented any person issuing out of the vessel, and entering on board, took full possession of her, throwing all the men overboard, and sparing only Landolfo himself, whom they put on board one of the carracks, leaving him nothing but his clothes; and having rifled the vessel of all her treasure, they sunk her in the sea.

On the day following, the storm havin[illegible]ted, [illegible]acks again set sail, and had a prosperous voya[illegible]en[illegible]n the wind

began to blow with more violence than before, and swelled the sea in such rude storms, that the two vessels were separated from each other. The carrack in which the wretched Landolfo lay was by the fury of the tempest driven against a rock (beneath the isle of Cephalonia), and, like a glass against a wall, dashed into a thousand pieces, the goods and merchandise, chests, coffers, and beds, and other things, floating in the sea. But notwithstanding the darkness of the night and raging of the waves, the crew attempted to save their lives, some by swimming, and others by catching hold of such things as floated near them, amongst whom the miserable Landolfo, desirous to save his life if possible, espied a chest or coffer before him, ordained to be the means of saving him from drowning. Now, although the day before he had wished for death infinite times rather than to return home in such wretched poverty, yet, seeing how other men strove to save their lives, he took advantage of this favour offered him, and keeping fast hold of the coffer as well as he could, and being driven at will by the winds and waves, he supported himself till day appeared. He then looked all around him, and saw nothing but clouds, the sea, the coffer, which one while slipped from under him, and at another time supported him, as the winds and waves drove it. All that day and the ensuing night he floated on the water, drinking more than he wished, and nearly perishing for food The next morning, by the will of Providence or the force of the winds, Landolfo, who was well-nigh become a sponge, holding his arms strongly about the chest, as a man in fear of drowning snatches at the smallest succour, drew near unto the shore of the island of Corfu, where, by good fortune, a poor woman, but a notable housewife, was scouring her dishes with the salt water and sand When she saw the chest drawing near her, and not being able to discover what it was, she grew fearful, and retiring from it, cried out aloud. Landolfo had not the power to speak to her, if he had seen her, being exhausted and almost senseless; but even as the winds and waves pleased, the chest was driven still nearer to the land, and then the woman perceived that it had the form of a coffer, and looking more carefully, beheld two arms extended over it, and afterwards she perceived the face of a man, though she was not able to judge whether or not he were alive. Moved by charitable and womanly compassion, she stepped in among the billows, and getting fast hold of Landolfo by the hair of his head, drew both the chest and him to land, and calling for her daughter to help her, with much difficulty she unfolded his arms from the chest, setting it upon her daughter's head, and then between them Landolfo was led into the town, and there conveyed into a warm room, where, by care, he soon recovered his strength, having been benumbed with extreme cold. After administering to him broth and wine, his senses became somewhat restored, and he saw where he was, but knew not in what manner he had been brought thither, until the good woman showed him the coffer that had kept him floating on the waves, and, next to God, had been the means of saving his life. The chest seemed of such slender weight that nothing of any value could be expected in it, either to recompense the woman's great pains and kindness bestowed on him, or for any matter

of his own benefit. Nevertheless, the woman being absent, he opened the chest, and found innumerable precious stones therein, some costly and curious set in gold, and others not fixed in any metal. Being instantly aware of their great worth and value, from his knowledge of such articles, he became much comforted, thanking God for his great success, and such an admirable means of deliverance from danger. Then reflecting that in a short space of time he had been twice beaten and buffeted by fortune, lest a third misfortune might follow, he consulted with himself how he might safely bring so rich a booty to his own house. Wherefore, that no suspicion might attach to him, having taken out the jewels, he told the good woman that the chest was of no further service to him; but if she pleased to lend him a small sack or bag, she might keep the coffer, as it might be useful to her in divers ways in her house. The woman gladly conformed to his desires, and Landolfo returned her infinite thanks for the kindness she had shown him; and throwing his sack on his neck, passed by sea to Branditio, and from thence to Tranium, where the merchants of the city bestowed good garments on him, he acquainting them with his disastrous fortunes, but not a word concerning his last good success. Being come home in safety to Ravello, he fell on his knees and thanked God for all His mercies to him. Then opening the sack, and viewing the jewels more at leisure than he had formerly done, he found them to be of such great value, that, selling them only at a very reasonable price, he was three times richer than when he departed from his home. Having disposed of them all, he sent a large sum of money to the good woman at Corfu, who had rescued him out of the sea, and saved his life in a danger so dreadful. The like he did at Tranium to the merchants that had newly clothed him, living richly upon the remainder, and never adventuring more on the sea, but ending his days in wealth and honour.

EIGHTH DAY, NOVELLA III.

THERE dwelt not long since in our city of Florence, a place which has indeed always possessed a variety of character and manners, a painter named Calandrino, a man of simple mind, and much addicted to novelties. The most part of his time he spent in the company of two brother painters, the one called Bruno and the other Buffalmacco, both men of humour and mirth, and somewhat satirical. These men often visited Calandrino, and found much entertainment in his original and unaffected simplicity of mind. There lived in Florence at the same time a young man of very engaging manners, witty, and agreeable, called Maso del Saggio, who hearing of the extreme simplicity of Calandrino, resolved to derive some amusement from his love of the marvellous, and to excite his curiosity by some novel and wonderful tales. Happening, therefore, to meet him one day in the Church of St.

John, and observing him attentively engaged in admiring the painting and sculpture of the tabernacle, which had been lately placed over the altar in that church, he thought he had found a fit opportunity of putting his scheme in execution, and acquainting one of his friends with his intentions, they walked together to the spot where Calandrino was seated by himself, and seeming not to be aware of his presence, began to converse between themselves of the qualities of various kinds of precious stones, of which Maso spoke with all the confidence of an experienced and skilful lapidary. Calandrino lènt a ready ear to their conference, and rising from his seat, and perceiving from their loud speaking that their conversation was not of a private nature, he accosted them Maso was not a little delighted at this, and pursuing his discourse, Calandrino at length asked him where these stones were to be found. Maso replied: "They mostly abound in Berlinzone, near a city of the Baschi, in a country called Bengodi, in which the vines are tied with sausages, a goose is sold for a penny, and the goslings given into the bargain; where there is also a high mountain made of Parmesan grated cheese, whereon dwell people whose sole employ is to make macaroni and other dainties, boiling them with capon broth, and afterwards throwing them out to all who choose to catch them, and near to the mountain runs a river of white wine, the best that was ever drunk, and without one drop of water in it." "Oh!" exclaimed Calandrino, "what a delightful country to live in! But pray, sir, tell me what do they with the capons after they have boiled them?" "The Baschi," said Maso, "eat them all!" "Have you," said Calandrino, "ever been in that country?" "How," answered Maso, "do you ask me, if I were ever there? A thousand times at the least!" "And how far, I pray you, is this happy land from our city?" quoth Calandrino. "In truth," replied Maso, "the miles are scarcely to be numbered, but for the most part we travel when we are in our beds at night, and if a man dream aright, he may be there in a few minutes." "Surely, sir," said Calandrino, "it is further hence than to Abruzzo?" "Undoubtedly," replied Maso, "but to a willing mind no travel is tedious" Calandrino observing that Maso delivered all these speeches with a steadfast and grave countenance, and without any gesture that he could construe into distrust, gave as much credit to them as to any matter of manifest truth, and said with much simplicity, "Believe me, sir, the journey is too far for me to undertake; but if it were somewhat nearer, I should like to accompany you thither to see them make this macaroni, and take my fill of it But now we are conversing, allow me, sir, to ask you whether or not any of the precious stones you just now spoke of are to be found in that country?" "Yes, indeed," replied Maso; "there are two kinds of them to be found in those territories, and both possessing eminent virtues. The one kind are the sandstones of Settigniano and of Montisci, which are of such excellent quality, that when millstones or grindstones are to be made, they knead the sand as they do meal, and make them in what form they please, in which respect they have a saying there, that grace is from God and millstones from Montisci! Such plenty are there of these millstones, so lightly here esteemed among us as

emeralds are with them, that there are whole mountains of them far greater than our Montemorello, which shine with a prodigious brightness at midnight, if you will believe me. They moreover cut and polish these millstones, and enchase them in rings, which are sent to the great Soldan, who gives whatever price they ask for them. The other is a stone which most of our lapidaries call heliotropium, and is of admirable virtue, for whoever carries it about his person is thereby rendered invisible as long as he pleases." Calandrino then said, "This is wonderful indeed; but where else are these latter kind to be found?" To which Maso replied, "They are not unfrequently to be found on our Mugnone." "Of what size and colour is this stone?" said Calandrino "It is of various sizes," replied Maso, "some larger than others, but uniformly black." Calandrino treasuring up all these things in his mind, and pretending to have some urgent business on hand, took leave of Maso, secretly proposing to himself to go in quest of these stones, but resolved to do nothing until he had first seen his friends Bruno and Buffalmacco, to whom he was much attached. He went therefore immediately in pursuit of them, in order that they three might have the honour of first discovering these stones, and consumed the whole morning in looking for them. At last recollecting that they were painting in the convent of the sisters of Faenza, neglecting all other affairs, and though the cold was extreme, he ran to them in all haste, and thus addressed them: "My good friends, if you will follow my advice, we three may shortly become the richest men in Florence, for I have just now learnt from a man of undeniable veracity that in Mugnone there is to be found a stone which renders any person that carries it about him invisible at his pleasure; and if you will be persuaded by me, we will all three go there before any one else to look for it, and we shall find it to a certainty, because I know its description; and when we have found it, we have nothing to do but to put it in our pockets, and go to the tables of the bankers and money-changers, which we see daily loaded with gold and silver, and help ourselves to as much as we please. Nobody can detect us, for we shall be invisible, and we shall thus speedily become rich without toiling all day on these church walls like slimy snails, as we poor artists are forced to do." Bruno and Buffalmacco hearing this, began to smile, and looking archly at each other, seemed to express their surprise, and greatly commended the advice of Calandrino. Buffalmacco then asked Calandrino what the stone was called. Calandrino, who had but a stupid memory, had utterly forgotten the name of the stone, and therefore said, "What need have we of the name, since we are so well assured of its virtues? Let us not delay any longer, but go off in search of it." "But of what shape is it?" said Bruno. Calandrino replied, "They are to be found of all shapes, but uniformly black: therefore it seems to me that we had better collect all the stones that we find black, and we shall then be certain to find it among them; but let us depart without further loss of time." Bruno signified his assent, but turning to Buffalmacco, said, "I fully agree with Calandrino, but I do not think that this is the proper time for our search, as the sun is now high, and is so hot that

we shall find all the stones on Mugnone dried and parched, and the very blackest will now seem whitest. But in the *morning*, when the dew is on the ground, and before the sun has dried the earth, every stone will have its true colour. Besides, there are many labourers now working in the plain, who, seeing us occupied in so serious a search, may guess what we are seeking for, and may chance to find the stones before us, and we may then have our labour for our pains. Therefore, in my opinion, this is an enterprise that should be taken in hand early in the morning, when the black stones will be easily distinguished from the white, and a festival day were the best of all others, as there will be nobody abroad to discover us." Buffalmacco applauded the advice of Bruno, and Calandrino assenting to it, they agreed that Sunday morning next ensuing should be the time when they would all go in pursuit of the stone, but Calandrino entreated them above all things not to reveal it to any person living, as it was confided to him in strict secrecy. Falling therefore on other subjects, Calandrino told them the wonders he had heard of the land of Bengodi, maintaining with solemn oaths and protestations that they were all true Calandrino then took his departure, and the other two agreed upon the course they should pursue with him for their own amusement. Calandrino waited impatiently for the Sunday morning, when he called upon his companions before break of day. They all three went out of the city at the gate of San Gallo, and did not halt until they came to the plain of Mugnone, where they immediately commenced their search for the marvellous stone. Calandrino went stealing on before the other two, persuading himself that he was born to find the heliotropium, and looking on every side of him, he rejected all other stones but the black, with which he first filled his breast, and afterwards both his pockets. He then took off his large painting apron, which he fastened with his girdle in the manner of a sack, and filled it also; and still not satisfied, he spread abroad his cloak, which being also loaded with stones, he bound up carefully for fear of losing the very least of them. Buffalmacco and Bruno during this time attentively eyed Calandrino, and observing that he had now completely loaded himself, and that their dinner hour was drawing nigh, Bruno, according to their scheme of merriment, said to Buffalmacco, pretending not to see Calandrino, although he was not far from them, "Buffalmacco, what is become of Calandrino?" Buffalmacco, who saw him close at hand, gazing all around as if desirous to find him, replied, "I saw him even now before us, hard by." "Undoubtedly," said Bruno, "he has given us the slip, and gone secretly home to dinner, and making fools of us, has left us to pick up black stones on these scorching plains of Mugnone." "Indeed he has served us right," said Buffalmacco, "for allowing ourselves to be gulled by such stories, nor could any but we two have been so credulous as to believe in the virtues of this heliotropium." Calandrino hearing them make use of these words while he stood so near to them, imagined that he had possessed himself of the genuine stone, and that by virtue of its qualities he was become invisible to his companions. His joy was now unbounded, and without saying a word he resolved to return

home with all speed, leaving his friends to provide for themselves. Buffalmacco perceiving his intent, said to Bruno, "Why should we remain here any longer? Let us return to the city." To which Bruno replied, "Yes, let us go; but I vow to God Calandrino shall no more make a fool of me, and were I now as near him as I was not long since, I would give him such a remembrance on the heel with this flint stone as should stick by him for a month, and teach him a lasting lesson for abusing his friends," and ere he had well finished his words, he struck Calandrino a violent blow on the heel with the stone. Though the blow was evidently very painful, Calandrino still preserved his silence, and only mended his pace. Buffalmacco then selecting another large flint stone, said to Bruno, "Thou seest this pebble! If Calandrino were but here, he should have a brave knock on the loins," and taking aim, he threw it, and struck Calandrino a violent blow on the back; and then all the way along the plain of Mugnone they did nothing but pelt him with stones, jesting and laughing until they came to the gates of San Gallo. They then threw down the remainder of the stones they had gathered, and stepping before Calandrino into the gateway, acquainted the guards with the whole matter, who, in order to support the jest, would not seem to see Calandrino as he passed by them, and were exceedingly amused to observe him sweat and groan under his burthensome load. Without resting himself in any place, he proceeded straight to his own house, which was situated near to the mills; fortune favouring him so far in the course of his adventures, that as he passed along the river-side, and afterwards through part of the city, he was neither met nor seen by any one, as everybody was then at dinner. Calandrino, ready to sink under his burthen, at length entered his own house. His wife, a handsome and discreet woman of the name of Monna Tessa, happened to be standing at the head of the stairs on his arrival, and being disconcerted and impatient at his long absence, somewhat angrily exclaimed, "I thought that the devil would never let thee come home! All the city have dined, and yet we must remain without our dinner." When Calandrino heard these words, and found that he was not invisible to his wife, he fell into a fit of rage, and exclaimed, "Wretch as thou art, thou hast utterly undone me; but I will reward thee for it;" and ascending into a small room, and there ridding himself of his burthen of stones, he ran down again to his wife, and seizing her by the hair of the head, and throwing her on the ground, beat and kicked her in the most unmerciful manner, giving her so many blows, in spite of all her tears and submission, that she was not able to move. Buffalmacco and Bruno, after they had spent some time in laughter with the guards at the gate, followed Calandrino at their leisure, and arriving at the door of his house, and hearing the disturbance upstairs between Calandrino and his wife, they called out to him. Calandrino, still in a furious rage, came to the window, and entreated they would come up to him. They, counterfeiting great surprise, ascended the stairs, and found the chamber floor covered with stones, and Calandrino's wife seated in a corner, her limbs severely bruised, her hair dishevelled, and her face bleeding,

and on the other side Calandrino himself, wearied and exhausted, flung on a chair. After regarding him for some time, they said, "How now, Calandrino, art thou about building a house, that thou hast provided thyself with so many loads of stones?" and then added, "And Monna Tessa! what has happened to her? You surely have been beating her! What is the meaning of this?" Calandrino, exhausted with carrying the stones and with his furious gust of passion, and moreover with the misfortune which he considered had befallen him, could not collect sufficient spirits to speak a single word in reply. Whereupon Buffalmacco said further, "Calandrino, if you have cause for anger in any other quarter, yet you should not have made such mockery of your friends as you have done to-day, carrying us out to the plains of Mugnone, like a couple of fools, and leaving us there without taking leave of us, or so much as bidding us good-day. But be assured this is the last time thou wilt ever serve us in this manner." Calandrino, somewhat recovered, replied, "Alas! my friends, be not offended; the case is very different to what you imagine. Unfortunate man that I am! the rare and precious stone that you speak of I found, and will relate the whole truth to you. You must know then, that when you asked each other the first time what was become of me, I was hard by you, not more than two yards' distance, and perceiving that you saw me not, I went before you, smiling to myself to hear you vent your rage upon me," and proceeding in his discourse, he recounted all that had happened, on his way home; and to convince them, showed them where he was struck on the back and on the heel; and further added, "As I passed through the gates, I saw you standing with the guards, but by virtue of the stone I carried in my bosom, was undiscovered of you all, and in going through the streets I met many friends and acquaintances, who are in the daily habit of stopping and conversing with me, and yet none of them addressed me, as I passed invisible to them all. But at length arriving at my own house, this fiend of a woman waiting on the stairs' head, by ill luck happened to see me, as you well know that women cause all things to lose their virtue, so that I, who might have called myself the only happy man in Florence, am now the most miserable of all. Therefore did I justly beat her as long as my strength would allow me, and I know no reason why I should not yet tear her in a thousand pieces, for I may well curse the day of our marriage, and the hour she entered my house." Buffalmacco and Bruno, when they heard this, feigned the greatest astonishment, though they were ready to burst with laughter, hearing Calandrino so confidently assert that he had found the wonderful stone, and lost it again by his wife's speaking to him. But when they saw him rise in a rage, with intent to beat her again, they stepped between them, protesting that his wife was in nowise to blame, but rather he himself, who knowing beforehand that women cause all things to lose their virtue, had not expressly commanded her not to be seen in his presence all that day, until he had satisfied himself of the real qualities of the stone; and that doubtless Providence had deprived him of this good fortune, because though his friends had accompanied him and assisted him in the search, he had deceived

them, and had not allowed them to participate in the benefit of the discovery. After much more conversation they with difficulty reconciled him to his wife, and leaving him overwhelmed with grief for the loss of the heliotropium, took their departure.

TENTH DAY, NOVELLA III.

IN the country of Cathay, if we may give faith to the relation of certain Genoese mariners, and other persons who have visited those parts, there once lived a man of the name of Nathan, of noble extraction, and rich beyond belief. Having his residence near to a great road, all people who travelled from the West to the East, or departed from the East to the West, were of necessity obliged to pass his abode, and possessing a noble and liberal mind, and desirous that his name should be famous for hospitality, with the assistance of some of the first architects of the country, he built in a short space of time one of the most magnificent palaces ever beheld, and furnished it in a most sumptuous manner with everything becoming a man of his high rank; and having moreover a numerous and beautiful family, his house became the seat of mirth and festivity, all persons both on their arrival and on their departure being treated with singular honour and respect. He persevered so long in this laudable course of conduct that his name was deservedly spread through the West as well as the East, and being now full of years, but nothing abated in his noble style of living, it happened that the fame of his hospitality reached the ears of a young man called Mitridanes, living in a country not very distant from his own. This young man finding himself not less rich than Nathan, and becoming envious of his fame, resolved within himself, by his superior hospitality, to eclipse the liberality of Nathan. Having therefore erected a palace similar to that of Nathan, he opened his gates with the most unbounded hospitality to all comers, and in a short time became justly renowned for his generosity. It happened one day as Mitridanes sate all alone in the court of his palace, that a poor woman entering at one of the gates, asked alms from him and received them, and returning by the second gate, again asked and again received, and so successively to the twelfth gate; but returning for the thirteenth time, Mitridanes accosting her, said, "Good woman, methinks you are extremely urgent in your request," at the same time, however, bestowing his alms as before. When the old woman heard these words, she exclaimed, "Oh, boundless charity of Nathan! I entered at the two-and-thirty gates of his palace, asking alms, and was never recognised by him, but received at each of them, and I am here arrived only at the thirteenth, and I am recognised and reproved;" and thus speaking, without again returning, she departed. Mitridanes, when he had reflected on the words of the old woman, which added to the fame of

Nathan and so much diminished his own, was seized with a sudden passion, and exclaimed, "Alas! when shall I only attain to the liberality of Nathan, for to surpass him I have no hope, when I am so far behind him in such trifling matters? Truly all my endeavours will be vain unless he be removed, which if his great age does not speedily effect, I must perform with my own hands;" and rising in this frame of mind, without communicating his intentions to any one, he departed with a few attendants on horseback, and on the third day, arriving in the neighbourhood of Nathan's palace, he desired his attendants not to make him known, and to procure themselves lodgings, and wait for his return. The evening now drawing on, he proceeded forwards alone, and happened to meet Nathan himself near his own palace, who, in a plain dress, was indulging in a solitary walk for his recreation. Mitridanes, not knowing him, asked him if he could direct him to the residence of Nathan. Nathan cheerfully answered, "My son, there is no one in this country who can instruct you better on that head than myself, and, if it be agreeable to you, I will show you the way." Mitridanes replied that he would in that do him a great kindness, but that he wished neither to be known nor seen of Nathan. To this Nathan answered, "Your request in this respect shall be observed, since such is your wish" Mitridanes then dismounting from his horse, and entering into agreeable conversation with Nathan, they proceeded together towards the palace. They were no sooner arrived there, than Nathan made signs to one of his servants to take the young man's horse, and, whispering at the same time in his ear, directed that neither he nor any of his household should discover him to the young man. As soon as they entered the palace, he placed Mitridanes in a sumptuous chamber, where none saw him except the servants who were appointed to wait on him, and, paying him the greatest possible respect, he himself remained to keep him company. Mitridanes being thus left alone with Nathan, although he held him in great reverence for his age, at length asked him who he was; to which Nathan replied, "I am, as you see, but a poor servant of Nathan, who have grown up with him from infancy, and am now like him well stricken in years; yet hath he never bestowed any other advancement upon me than what you see, in which respect, how much soever other men may commend him, yet have I no cause to do it." These words afforded some hope to Mitridanes that he might be enabled, by a proper degree of caution, to put in execution his wicked determination. Nathan now in a courteous manner asked him in return who he was, and the business which led him to the palace, offering his advice and assistance to the utmost of his power. Mitridanes for some time debated within himself what to reply; but resolving at last to confide his intentions, with great circumlocution he entreated his secrecy, and after that his counsel and aid, and then informed him who he was and the object of his visit, and communicated his whole design to him. When Nathan had heard this explanation, and saw the evil intentions of Mitridanes, he was sensibly moved, but with great presence of mind and an unaltered countenance replied, "Your father, Mitridanes, was an honourable man, and I perceive that you are determined not to

degenerate from him, having adopted so noble a system of hospitality, and I very much commend you for the envy you bear to the virtues of Nathan, for if there were sufficient of such noble deeds, the world, which is now most miserable, would soon become good and happy. The proposition which you have made known to me shall assuredly be kept secret, in which, though I cannot give you any great aid, I will yet communicate a piece of intelligence that may be of service to you. You must know, then, that about half a mile distant from hence there is a small wood, in which Nathan is accustomed to walk alone almost every morning, making it his recreation for a considerable space of time. It will then be an easy matter for you to find him there and accomplish your object. If you should succeed in slaying him, you may then return home without interruption, not indeed by the way you came, but by another road which you will find as you leave the wood, on your left hand, and though somewhat wild and overgrown with underwood, it will be a nearer and safer way to your house." Mitridanes, when he had received this information, and Nathan had left him, secretly rejoined his attendants, and told them where to wait for him on the following day. Early the next morning, Nathan, in conformity with the counsel he gave to Mitridanes, departed alone to the wood, the place appointed for his death. Mitridanes having risen, and taken up his bow and his sword (not having any other arms with him), and mounting his horse, proceeded to the wood, where he discovered Nathan walking at some distance all alone, taking his usual recreation; and reflecting that before he slew him he should like to see him and speak with him, he rode suddenly up to him, and seizing him by the band of his bonnet, cried, "Die! wretch as thou art!" To which Nathan answered only, "It is meet that I should" Mitridanes, when he heard his voice, looked upon his face, and immediately recognised him to be the same man who had received him with so much benignity and familiarity, and had counselled him so faithfully; and his fury instantly subsiding, and his revenge turning into shame, he cast away the sword which he had drawn for the purpose of slaying him, and dismounting from his horse, threw himself in tears at the feet of Nathan, saying, "Dearest father, I humbly confess your unbounded liberality, perceiving with what caution you have manifested your spirit to me; and God, who has had a greater regard to my duty than I have myself had, has at this moment of my utmost need opened my intellectual eyes, which wretched envy had closed, and the readier you have been to favour me, the more deeply do I deplore my transgression. Revenge yourself on me, therefore, in whatever way you judge most suitable to my offence." Nathan then raising Mitridanes from the ground, and kissing his cheek and tenderly embracing him, said, "My son, with regard to your attempt on my life, whatever you may term it, there is no need for you either to ask or receive pardon, since it was not through malice, but a desire of being reputed more estimable than me, that you did it. Be assured therefore of my good will, and believe that no other man will love you with the affection which I bear towards you, justly appreciating the magnanimity of your mind, which was bent, not on amassing heaps

of money, as wretched misers do, but on spending it with liberality. Nor blush at having wished to become famous by my death, nor think that it excites my surprise The most potent emperors and kings, instigated by the same feelings as yourself, have often slain, not one man only, as you wished to have done, but countless multitudes of men, and have burnt and destroyed cities in order to extend their dominions and perpetuate their fame. Therefore, when you designed to render yourself famous by taking my life, you did not contemplate anything new or strange, but only a thing of common occurrence." Mitridanes could not receive this apology as any excuse for his own evil designs, but thanking Nathan for the kindness he had manifested, expressed his astonishment that Nathan should have assented to his plan, and plotted and contrived his own death. To which Nathan replied, "Mitridanes, I do not wish that you should feel surprised either at my advice or my disposition of mind, for it was my object to gratify you in what you were ambitious of effecting, as no one ever came to my house whom I did not satisfy to the utmost of my power in the way most agreeable to him, and seeing that you came here with a desire to possess yourself of my life, in order that you might not be the only person who ever departed from me dissatisfied, I immediately resolved to give it you, and I now pray and entreat you that, if you are still desirous of it, you will take it and satisfy yourself, as I know not how I could better dispose of it. I have now lived eighty years, and they have passed away in pleasure and happiness, and I know from the course of nature and the departure of my contemporaries, that I have only a short span of life remaining. I therefore consider it much better to give away that as I have been in the habit of bestowing my other treasures, than to keep it until it shall be rudely forced from me by nature. A hundred years would indeed be a poor gift; how much less then are six or eight years, which are all I can expect! Take my life, then, I entreat you, if it be agreeable to you; for whilst I have lived, I never found any one else that was desirous of having it, and I know not when any one else may ask for it, if you do not accept of it; and if I should not find any one to take it, I know that the longer I keep it, the less value it will be of, and therefore, lest it should become quite vile and useless, I pray you to accept of it." Mitridanes, deeply blushing with shame, replied, "God forbid, sir, that I should take so dear a thing as your life, and may God pardon me for my evil designs. Rather than diminish the term of your life, I would gladly, if it were in my power, add mine own to lengthen it." "And will you then indeed add to it," Nathan smartly replied, "and oblige me to do that to you which as yet I never did unto any man, namely, rob you to enrich myself?" "Certainly," said Mitridanes. "Then," said Nathan, "you shall do as I direct. You shall remain a young man as you are here in my house, and shall have the name of Nathan, and I will go to your residence, and call myself Mitridanes." To which Mitridanes replied, "If indeed I knew how to act like you, I would without hesitation accept your offer, but since it is very evident that my deeds would diminish the reputation of Nathan, and as I am not desirous to destroy in another that which I cannot myself

obtain, I will not accept your offer; but, as you have worthily taught me, will live contented with my own condition" This and much more agreeable conversation passed between Nathan and Mitridanes as they returned to the palace, where Nathan sumptuously entertained Mitridanes for many days, and encouraged by every means in his power his noble spirit of emulation. And Mitridanes, now wishing to return to his own house with his attendants, Nathan having bade him farewell, he departed, having found by good experience that he could never hope to surpass Nathan in liberality.

TENTH DAY, NOVELLA IX.

It is well known that in the time of the Emperor Frederic I. there was a general confederacy throughout Christendom for the purpose of recovering the Holy Land from the infidels Of which circumstance, Saladin, a noble lord, and at that time Soldan of Babylon, having early intelligence, resolved in his own mind to obtain a personal view of the preparations the Christians were making for their crusade, in order the better to provide for his own defence Having therefore put in order all his affairs in Egypt, and giving out that he was going on a pilgrimage, and accompanied by three of his principal lords and counsellors, and with three attendants only, he set off on his journey under the disguise of a merchant. After having gone through many Christian countries, and travelling through Lombardy in order to pass the mountains, it happened that in going between Milan and Pavia, and evening coming on, they fell in with a gentleman, Messer Torello d'Istria of Pavia, who with his attendants, and dogs, and falcons, was then passing his time at a beautiful seat which he possessed on the Tesino. As soon as Messer Torello observed the travellers, and saw that they were gentlemen and strangers, he was desirous of paying respect to them; and on Saladin asking one of his attendants how far it was to Pavia, and whether or not they could reach the city in good time, Messer Torello did not allow his servant to reply, but accosting them himself, said, "You cannot, gentlemen, reach Pavia this evening in time to pass the gates." "Then," said Saladin, "have the kindness to inform us (as we are strangers) where we may obtain a lodging for the night." Messer Torello answered, "This I will cheerfully do. I was just on the eve of sending one of my people to the neighbourhood of Pavia on an errand. I will therefore send him with you, and he will conduct you to a place where I hope you will find good entertainment." Then addressing himself to one of the most discreet of his servants, he directed him how to act, and sent him with the strangers; and hastening himself with all despatch to his own house, he ordered as elegant a supper as the time would allow to be prepared, and the tables to be laid in the garden; and having done this, he returned to the door to receive his guests.

The servant engaging the travellers in conversation on various subjects, led them a little way round through the country to his master's house, without informing them to what place he was conducting them. As soon as Messer Torello saw them approach, he advanced to them on foot, and receiving them with a smile, said, "Gentlemen, you are very welcome." Saladin, who was a polite man, saw that this gentleman, being in doubt whether or not they might have accepted an invitation for the night, had thus by a friendly stratagem conducted them to his own house, and said, "Sir, if it were possible to chide a gentleman for his hospitality, we might chide you, who (to say nothing of our having interrupted you on your journey) have thus brought us to share your noble courtesy when we had no claim on you but from our inquiry on the road." Messer Torello discreetly and eloquently replied, "Gentlemen, this reception which I have given you is, I know, in respect of your rank, a poor one indeed, but in truth you could not find any eligible place out of Pavia this evening, and I beg you therefore not to murmur that you have been thus brought somewhat out of your way to obtain a less uncomfortable lodging." Whilst he was thus speaking, his servants came up, and received the travellers' horses as they dismounted. Messer Torello then led the three gentlemen to the chambers prepared for them, where their boots were pulled off, where they were refreshed with some cool wine, and where they were detained in agreeable conversation until the hour of supper. Saladin and his companions being acquainted with the Latin tongue, were enabled to understand Messer Torello, and they all agreed amongst themselves that he was the most accomplished and agreeable cavalier, both in manners and in conversation, that they had ever met with. Messer Torello on his part rightly judged the travellers to be men of high birth, and deeply regretted that it was not in his power to invite suitable company to meet them, and give them a more honourable reception. He however determined to make amends the next day, and acquainting one of his servants with his wishes, he despatched him with his orders to Pavia, the gates of which were not yet shut, to his wife, a lady of a discreet and noble mind. He then led the travellers into his garden, and politely inquired their country. To which Saladin replied, "We are merchants of Cyprus, travelling thence on our own affairs to Paris." Upon which Messer Torello said, "Would to God that our country produced such gentlemen as your Cyprus produceth merchants!" and whilst they were thus conversing, supper was announced, and they were honourably served with all that the house afforded. As soon as the tables were withdrawn, Messer Torello judging that the travellers would be fatigued, conducted them to their chambers, where comfortable beds were prepared for them, and he himself also retired to rest. The serving-man who was despatched to Pavia communicated his message to his mistress, who with true magnanimity of mind immediately called together all the friends and servants of Messer Torello, and provided everything suitable for a grand entertainment, sending by torchlight to invite many of the most noble citizens to the feast, and arranging everything agreeably to the commands she received from

her husband. The next morning the travellers prepared for their departure, and Messer Torello accompanied them on horseback, taking his falcons with him, and leading them towards the river, where they for some time partook of his sport. But Saladin now requesting that he might have some person to direct him to Pavia, and to the best inn in the city, Messer Torello replied, "I will myself have the pleasure to conduct you, as my affairs lead me thither to-day." They, believing him, remained satisfied, and proceeded with him on the road, and it being now the third hour when they reached the city, and supposing they were going to one of the principal hotels, they arrived with Messer Torello at his own gates, where there were nearly fifty of the chief citizens already in attendance to receive them as they dismounted from their horses. Saladin and his companions were immediately aware of the true state of the case, and said, "Messer Torello, this is not what we requested of you. You have done more than we wished the last night, when you would not allow us to proceed on our journey." To which Messer Torello replied, "Gentlemen, for the pleasure of your company last night I was indebted rather to chance than to yourselves, which, as the hour was late, compelled you to take shelter in my poor house; but to-day I hope to be beholden to your bounty, and these gentlemen with me whom you see around you, to whom your courtesy, I feel assured, will not allow you to deny the honour of your company to dinner." Saladin and his companions being thus overcome, dismounted and were received by the gentlemen, and politely conducted to their chambers, which were sumptuously prepared for them, and having thrown off their travelling dresses and refreshed themselves, they entered the dining-room, which was most splendidly furnished, and water being offered for their hands, they were seated at table, and magnificently served with a profusion of viands, insomuch that the emperor himself could not have been entertained with greater honour. Although Saladin and his companions were men of high birth, and accustomed to the display of great magnificence, they were nevertheless astonished, and their surprise was increased the more when they considered the rank of their host, who they knew was not a nobleman, but a simple citizen. When dinner was ended and the tables withdrawn, after some conversation, the heat being very great, the gentlemen of Pavia retired to repose, and Messer Torello remained alone with the travellers, and entering with them into a chamber, in order that nothing of all his treasures might remain unseen by them, he ordered his lady to be called, who being very beautiful and of a noble presence, and attired in the richest dress, accompanied by two beautiful boys, her sons, advanced and gracefully saluted the strangers. On seeing her, they rose from their seats and received her with becoming respect; and requesting her to sit down, showed great kindness to her two sons. The lady, after she had conversed with them for some little time, and Messer Torello going out of the room, politely inquired what country they were of and whither they were bound. To which inquiries the travellers replied as they had done to Messer Torello. The lady then with a gracious smile said, "I see then that my womanly prudence may be of service, and I trust you will not be

so ungracious as to refuse my humble request, nor to consider as unworthy of acceptance a humble gift which I mean to offer to you; but bearing in mind that ladies can only give in conformity with their limited means, you will, I hope, rather regard the intention of the donor than the quality of the gift." She then ordered to be brought in two robes for each of the travellers, the one lined with cloth of gold, and the other with costly fur, more beseeming lords than citizens and merchants, and three light vestments of satin richly embroidered. "I beg you," she then said, "to accept these robes, such as my husband wears, more especially as you are so far from your wives, and have already come a great distance, and have yet far to travel; and not forgetting that merchants are men of delicate habits, and although these are of slender value, they may yet do you service." The strangers were not a little amazed, and plainly saw that Messer Torello was determined to leave no instance of courtesy unperformed, and almost doubted, when they considered the costliness of these noble robes, whether they were not discovered by Messer Torello; but one of them thus addressing the lady said, "These are indeed, madam, valuable gifts, nor should we think it right in us to accept of them did you not make it a particular request, to which we cannot give a denial." Messer Torello now returning, the lady recommended them to the protection of God, and retired. Their servants were at the same time provided with suitable dresses. Messer Torello by his entreaties prevailed on them to stay over the day with him, and having reposed a while, and clothed themselves in their new robes, they rode with Messer Torello through the city, and when the hour of supper approached they were again magnificently entertained. At a late hour they retired to rest, and the next day, when they came to depart, they found in the place of their horses, which were overwearied with travel, three beautiful palfreys and fresh horses for their attendants; which, when Saladin observed, he turned to his companions and said, "By Allah! I never met with a more accomplished, courteous, and affable man than this Torello, and if all the Christian kings bear their offices as nobly as this gentleman his knighthood, the Sultan of Babylon will not be able to resist the approach of one of them, much less so many as we see preparing for war," and thus, after an interchange of much kind language, returning their grateful thanks, they mounted their horses. Messer Torello, with many gentlemen, his friends, accompanied them for a considerable distance out of the city, and entreating Saladin to visit him on his return, said, "I know not, gentlemen, who you are, nor against your will do I desire it, but whether you be merchants or not, I beg you to hold me in your remembrance, and so I commend you to God." Saladin now having taken leave of all the friends of Torello, answered him in these words, "Sir, I wish that fortune may one day put it in our power to let you see some of our merchandises for the better confirmation of your belief." Saladin then departed with his companions, resolving in his noble mind, if his life should be spared in the war which was likely to ensue, to make a due return to Messer Torello for the honour thus shown to him. He then discoursed at large with his companions of Torello and his lady, and his entertainments and

presents, and spoke of them with deserved commendation. Saladin, after visiting all the West, in which he endured great fatigues, at length embarked on board a ship and returned to Alexandria, in order to avail himself of the information he had received for his defence. Messer Torello, on his return to Pavia, often troubled himself with conjectures who these three travellers could be, but never made any correct surmise. The time of the Crusades now approaching, and great preparations making on all sides, Messer Torello, notwithstanding the tears and entreaties of his wife, resolved to share in the honour of the enterprise; and having provided all requisites, and being now ready to mount his horse and take his departure, he thus addressed his lady, whom he dearly loved: "I now depart, dearest wife, as thou seest, on this holy enterprise, as well for the honour of the body as the salvation of the soul. I therefore commend to thy care all our possessions, and as a thousand accidents may intervene to prevent my return, I have to ask you one favour, which is, that if you have not certain intelligence of my death, you will wait a year, and a month, and a day, commencing from this day of my departure, before you marry again." The lady, bitterly weeping, replied, "I know not how I shall surmount the sorrow in which your departure will involve me, but if I should survive, believe that whatever may happen to you, life or death, I shall live and die the wife of Messer Torello, and shall ever cherish his memory." To which Messer Torello answered, "Certain I am, lady, that you will keep this promise as far as lies in your own power; but you are young and beautiful, and of high parentage, and held in universal esteem; on which account I doubt not that many noble suitors, if there be a rumour of my death, may ask you from your brothers and relations, from whose entreaties you will not be able to defend yourself, and will perhaps be forced to submit to their wishes, and this is the reason why I beg this delay, and no longer, from you" The lady then said, "I will conform myself to your wishes to the utmost of my power, and will obey you in all things you may command me, praying that Heaven will return you safe home before the time you have fixed;" and with these words the lady, weeping, embraced her husband, and taking a ring from her finger, said, "If I chance to die before I see you again, remember me when you look upon this ring." Receiving the ring, he mounted on horseback, and bidding all his friends adieu, departed on his way. When he reached Genoa he embarked on board a galley, and in a short time arrived at Acre, where he joined the Christian army. At this period a violent distemper broke out in the camp, and such was the good fortune or prudence of Saladin, that all the Christians who escaped from the pestilence were made his prisoners without a struggle, and were distributed and imprisoned in various cities, and amongst other persons, Messer Torello was made captive and carried into Alexandria. Fearing to be discovered, he there took upon himself the keeping of falcons, of which science he was a thorough master, and through this circumstance attracted the notice of Saladin, who released him from prison, and retained him as his falconer. Messer Torello, who was only known to the Sultan by the name of the Christian (as they did not

whose appearance, manners, and address (not to mention beauty, which is a perishable quality), have won my admiration above all others. It would indeed have been my pride, since fortune has sent you here, that we might together have enjoyed the term of life prescribed to us in reigning together over this kingdom which I possess, as joint rulers; but as Heaven denies me this favour, and you are resolved to return to Pavia or to die, I should have wished to have known the time, that I might have accompanied you to your own house with a suitable retinue of my nobility, in order to pay a just tribute to your virtues. But as this too is denied me, and as you desire to be there immediately, I will fulfil your wishes in the manner I have related." To which Messer Torello said, "My lord, your deeds have sufficiently testified your affection to me without words, and far beyond my merits, but I now entreat you that this last act of your kindness may be speedily effected, since to-morrow is the latest day that will be allowed me" Saladin assured him it should be done; and on the next day, intending to send Messer Torello away in the evening, he ordered a magnificent bed to be set up in the great hall of his palace, the mattress formed of velvet and cloth of gold, and the quilts, counterpoints, and coverings sumptuously embroidered with orient pearls and precious stones of inestimable value, with two richly wrought pillows, befitting so noble a bed, and having ordered this, he commanded that Messer Torello, who was now recovered, should be clothed in the richest dress, after the fashion of the Saracens, that ever was seen, and placed on his head one of the largest of his own turbans; and the hour being now late, Saladin, accompanied by many of his lords, entered the chamber where Messer Torello was, and seating himself at his bedside, almost in tears thus spoke: "Messer Torello, the hour which is to separate us approaches, and as I cannot possibly accompany you, from the nature of the journey you have to undertake, I must bid you adieu in this chamber, and am now come for that purpose; but before I recommend you to God, I entreat you, by that affection and friendship which subsists between us, that you will often think of me, and ere our lives end that you will, after having arranged all your affairs in Lombardy, return to visit me once more, and make atonement for this sudden departure; and to this end do not fear to trouble me with your letters, and to ask anything that may be in my power, which I would certainly rather grant to you than to any man living." On this, Messer Torello could not refrain from weeping, and in a few words answered, that it was impossible his benefits and favours could ever be effaced from his remembrance, and that he would without fail execute his commands as soon as an opportunity should be afforded him; on which Saladin affectionately embraced and kissed him, and bade him adieu with many tears. He then left the chamber, his barons accompanying him, and passed into the hall where the bed was prepared, and it waxing late, and the magician waiting, a physician came in, and presented a beverage to Messer Torello, who considering it a cordial, drank it off, and became immediately entranced. He was then placed in his sleep, by command of Saladin, upon the sumptuous bed, on which was affixed a

large and beautiful crown of great value, and an inscription which denoted it to be sent by Saladin to the wife of Messer Torello; and he further placed on the finger of Messer Torello a ring, in which was enchased a carbuncle of such dazzling brightness, that it shone like a flaming torch, and the value of which it was impossible to estimate. He also girded round him a rich sword, highly decorated, with a clasp in front, in which were set the finest pearls ever seen, and many precious stones; and at each side of him he placed two large basons of gold filled with ducats, and many ropes of pearls, and rings and girdles; and other treasures, which it would be too tedious to enumerate, were strewed around him. Saladin then once again kissed Messer Torello, and commanded the magician to despatch, upon which the bed, with Messer Torello, was invisibly carried thence, and was transported and set down in the Church of San Pietro, in Ciel d'Or in Pavia, as had been agreed on. When the bell rang for matins, one of the monks, who was the sexton, entering the church with a light in his hand, and suddenly coming upon this sumptuous bed, was seized with a panic and fled instantly out of the church. The abbot and the monks seeing him thus terrified, were surprised, and demanded the cause of his flight. The monk then informed him what he had seen. "How is this?" said the abbot; "thou art not a child, nor a new-comer to the church, that thou shouldst be thus terrified; wherefore return with us, and let us see the cause of thy fears." Having therefore lighted their torches, the abbot and his monks entered the church, where, to their amazement, they found the magnificent bed, and Messer Torello laid upon it in a recumbent posture in a deep sleep. Whilst they stood around in astonishment, contemplating the costliness of the bed and the rich jewels, it happened that Messer Torello awoke and heaved a deep sigh. The abbot and monks seeing him stir, all ran out of the church, crying aloud, "God and St. Peter save us!" Messer Torello, opening his eyes and looking around him, found himself on the spot to which Saladin had promised to transport him, and was thereon greatly rejoiced; and sitting up in bed, and regarding all the riches around him, though he before well knew the munificence of Saladin, he found it now tenfold increased; but seeing the monks flying, and guessing the cause, he called upon the abbot by name and entreated him to return without fear, as he was no other than his nephew Torello. The abbot, when he heard this, became more terrified than before, as he considered his nephew to have been dead for many months past; but after some pause and consideration, and hearing himself still called on, and blessing himself with the sign of the cross, he advanced somewhat nearer to the bed, when Messer Torello said, "Holy father, of what are you afraid? I am living, thanks be to God, and am thus returned from beyond sea." The abbot attentively regarded him, and although his beard was grown, and he was dressed in the Arabian costume, he yet [illegible]sed his features, and taking him by the hand said, "Son, th[illegible]ly returned, but thou needest not wonder at my alarm, si[illegible] country there is not a person who does n[illegible] believe thee [illegible] proof of which I may inform thee th

wife, overcome by the entreaties of her friends, and against her own wishes, is this morning to be married to a new husband, and a marriage feast is prepared in honour of these her second nuptials" Messer Torello, rising from his bed, and giving the abbot and monks a gracious reception, earnestly entreated that none of them would divulge his return until he had made all his arrangements. He then placed his jewels in safety and recounted his adventures to the abbot. The abbot, rejoicing in his good fortune, united with him in returning thanks to God for his safe return. Messer Torello next inquired from the abbot who was the intended new husband of the lady. The abbot then informed him; and Messer Torello said, "Before my return be known, I wish to see how my wife is disposed with respect to these intended nuptials, and although it is not customary for religious persons to attend on such occasions, yet I entreat you, out of regard to me, to carry me to the marriage feast, as a guest under your protection." The abbot willingly consented; and the next day sent to the intended bridegroom to beg his permission to be present at the marriage with a stranger newly arrived. To which the gentleman replied that he should receive them both with infinite pleasure. The dinner hour being now come, Messer Torello, in the same dress which he wore when the abbot found him in the church, went to the house of the bridegroom, where he excited the attention of all the guests, but was not recognised by any of them, as the abbot represented him to be a Saracen of rank, sent by the Sultan on an embassy to the King of France. Messer Torello was then placed at a table directly opposite his lady, where he sate regarding her with great delight, and observed, to his joy, the trouble visible in her countenance on this second marriage. She in return gazed on him for some time; not that she at all recollected him, as his beard and foreign dress, and the firm belief of his death, prevented any suspicion of the kind. Messer Torello thought the time was now come when he should make proof of her constancy, and ascertain whether or not she would recognise him; so taking in his hand the ring which he had received from her on his departure, he called to him a young page who was waiting on her, and said to him, "Go to the bride, and saluting her from me, inform her that it is a custom in my country, that when any stranger is invited to the marriage-feast, the bride, in sign that he is welcome, offers to him the same cup in which she drinks herself, filled with the best wine, and when the stranger has drunk as much as is agreeable to him, the bride pledges him in the rest" The page delivered the message to the bride, who being alike courteous and affable, and considering Messer Torello to be a foreigner of rank, in order to convince him that his presence was acceptable to her, ordered a large cup of gold (which stood directly before her), to be washed, and when it was filled with the choicest wine, to be carried to the stranger, which was done accordingly. Messer Torello having drunk to the bride, conveyed the ring into the cup without any person perceiving it; and again covering the cup, returned it to the bride, who graciously received it, and, to honour the stranger, drank up the remainder of the wine, and seeing the ring, took it out unobserved by any of the company. She immediately recognised it to

be the ring which she had given to Messer Torello on his departure, and fixing her eyes steadfastly on the stranger, the cheerful blood mounting up into her cheeks, and returning again with remembrance to her heart, assured her that, however disguised, he was no other than her husband. She then suddenly started up like one possessed, and overthrew all before her, exclaiming, "My lord and husband! Messer Torello!" and flying to the table at which Messer Torello sate, without paying regard to the riches thereon, she cast it aside as much as her strength would allow, and throwing herself on her husband's neck, clasped him with such force, weeping and sobbing, that she could not be separated from him; nor did she show any moderation in this excess of passion until Messer Torello spoke, and entreated her to be patient and composed. Thus strangely was the solemnity disturbed, yet was every one glad and joyful at the return of so worthy a cavalier, who, entreating them all to vouchsafe him silence, related all his adventures to the company, from the time of his departure to the present hour, concluding that he was in no manner offended with the intended new bridegroom, who, from the assured report of his death, deserved no blame in making choice of his lady as his wife. The bridegroom, though his countenance was somewhat overcast, generously replied that he relinquished his claim, being convinced that the lady was Torello's wife. The lady then resigned the ring and the crown she had received from her intended husband, and placed on her finger the ring she had found in the cup, and on her head the rich crown sent to her by Saladin, and departing with such pomp and magnificence as had never before been seen in Pavia, they came to Messer Torello's house, the citizens considering it a miracle thus to recover Signor Torello again. Messer Torello then distributed his rich jewels, giving a part of them to the intended bridegroom, and another part to the abbot and others, and then despatched a messenger to Saladin with letters, to acquaint him with his happy return to his native country, and confessing his friendship and his obligations, and then lived many years with his noble lady, exercising greater courtesies to strangers than he had ever before done. Such was the happy termination of the misfortunes of Messer Torello and the sorrows of his lady, and such the reward of their courteous hospitality.

SECOND DAY, NOVELLA VI..

After the death of the Emperor Frederic II., Manfred was crowned King of Sicily, in whose court was a gentleman of Naples, in high authority, called Arrighetto Capece, who had a wife, a beautiful and elegant woman, by birth also a Neapolitan, called Madonna Bertola Caracciola. Whilst this Arrighetto was left in the government of the kingdom of Sicily, he received intelligence that Charles I. had won the battle of Beneventum and slain Manfred, and seeing the whole kingdom soon after revolting to Charles, and placing little reliance on the

fidelity of the Sicilians, and unwilling to make his submission to the enemy of his sovereign, he took instant measures to secure his safety by flight His intentions were, however, discovered by the Sicilians, and he, and many of his friends, partisans of Manfred, were delivered over to the new king, and the possession of the island confirmed to him. Madonna Beritola on this sudden change of fortune, ignorant of the fate of her husband and fearing the worst, abandoned everything, and with her son of about eight years of age, called Geoffrey, hired a bark, and fled in a destitute state to Lipari She there very soon gave birth to another son, whom she named Scacciato (the poor expelled), and taking with her a nurse, they all went on board again, in order to return to her parents in Naples. But it fell out contrary to her expectations, for the vessel was driven from her course by a violent gale to the Isle of Poroga, where, seeking shelter in a small bay, they waited till the storm should subside. Madonna Beritola went on shore in the island with the rest of the party, and happening in her walk to meet with a solitary and secluded dell, she sate down all alone to mourn over her lost husband. Day after day she indulged herself in this melancholy pleasure, and it happened on one occasion, when she was thus absent, that a corsair galley surprised their little bark, captured it, and carried it away, with all the persons on board. Madonna Beritola, when her mournful task was ended, returned as usual to the shore to her children, but was surprised to find the place deserted. Immediately suspecting what had really happened, she turned her eyes to the deep, and there saw the corsair departing at no great distance, carrying the smaller vessel away with her From this she instantly perceived the extent of her calamity, and that, as before she had lost her husband, so she was now deprived of her children ; and in this wretched state, deserted, solitary, and friendless, calling on her husband and children, she fell down in a swoon on the seashore. No kind hand was near to throw cold water on her face, or restore her to herself, but her spirits took their own course, and as soon as her lost powers were restored to her, in a flood of tears and grief she again called on her children, searching for them, though she knew it to be in vain, in every cave on the shore She soon found that all her labours were fruitless, and night approaching, amidst conflicting hopes and fears, she began to provide for her own safety, and quitting the shore, returned to the spot which had been the scene of her daily lamentations. The night being passed amidst a crowd of fears and alarms, the bright day again appeared, and compelled her to seek some food for her sustenance in the woods and fields , and having gathered some roots and herbs, she again resigned herself to melancholy reflections on her future destiny. As she traversed the woods absorbed in these pensive meditations, she observed a goat enter a cave, and a little while after come forth again. Upon this she paused, and entering the cave, found in it two young kids, yeaned as it seemed the self-same day. These two young kids in her present desolate state appeared to her the most engaging creatures in the world ; and as from her recent delivery she had milk, she lay down before them, and taking them tenderly up in her arms, placed one to each breast,

to which they made no refusal, and from that time seemed to make no distinction between her and their dam. The hapless Beritola thus found companions in her solitary abode, and preserved her life by feeding on roots and drinking the running water, often weeping in silence when she remembered her husband and her children, and her former happy days, and making up her mind to live and die in this desert island. After she had led this savage life for some months, it happened that at the very spot where she had landed there arrived a bark from Pisa, which remained there several days. On board this vessel was a gentleman called Conrad de' Marchesi Malespini, with his wife, a noble and devout woman. They had been absent on a pilgrimage, and having visited all the holy places in Apulia, were now on their return home. This gentleman, accompanied by his wife, happened one day to wander up into the island, not far from Madonna Beritola's solitary abode. Having his servants and dogs with him, the hounds, in hunting after game, came suddenly upon the two kids, which had now attained their growth and were seeking their food. The kids finding themselves pursued by the hounds, fled through the wood to the cave where Madonna Beritola sate, seeming to implore her protection. Seeing their danger, she suddenly caught up a staff and compelled the hounds to relinquish their pursuit. By this time Conrad and his wife, who had closely followed the chase, came up, and seeing what had passed, beheld with amazement a lady with long black dishevelled hair, savage in her appearance and wretched in her attire; nor was Madonna Beritola less astonished to behold the strangers. When, at her request, Conrad had called off his dogs, they entreated to know who she was and the reason of her living there. She then narrated her story, and expressed her determination to live and die in the island. When Conrad, who was well acquainted with Arrighetto Capece, heard her tale, compassion forced tears from his eyes, and he earnestly endeavoured to change her determination, offering to conduct her in safety to his own house, where he promised she should remain with him as much respected as his own sister, until fortune should again smile on her. When Madonna Beritola resisted these kind offers, the gentleman left his wife with her, saying that he would go and procure some food for her, and bring her some of his wife's dress, as her own was rent and torn, hoping by these means to induce her to change her mind. His wife remained with Madonna Beritola, compassionating her misfortunes, and when both viands and garments were brought, they prevailed on her by great intercession to change her dress and to partake of the food, although she protested she would not depart into any place where she might be known. At length they persuaded her to accompany them to Lunigiana, carrying also with her the two kids and their dam, which were then sporting round her in the cave, to the great admiration of Conrad's lady. As soon as the weather grew favourable for their departure, Madonna Beritola embarked with Conrad and his wife, followed by the young goats and their dam, and as her name was known only to Conrad and his lady, the servants and ship's crew called her the goat-herdess. A gentle and favourable gale soon bringing them to the mouth of the Magra,

they landed near Conrad's castle. Madonna Beritola here became a companion to the wife of Conrad, wearing a widow's dress, the goats always familiarly keeping them company.

The corsairs who had seized on the bark in the island of Ponzo, and had carried it away in the absence of Madonna Beritola, sailed with their prize to Genoa, and there dividing the spoil amongst the owners of the galley, it happened that the nurse of Madonna Beritola and the two children fell to the lot of one Messer Gasparino d'Oria, who sent them to his house to add to the number of his domestics and to assist them in their duties The nurse wept and grieved beyond measure at the loss of her lady, and the wretched condition into which she and the children were now fallen. But she saw that tears were of no avail, and that she must share in their fate, and though of humble condition, she was yet discreet; wherefore comforting herself as well as she could, and considering the nature of their disaster, she wisely judged that the children, if they were recognised, might incur greater dangers, and moreover indulging a hope that fortune might change, and perhaps restore them at some time or other to the expectancies of their birth, she resolved not to discover them to any person until a proper time presented itself, but to reply to all who asked her that they were her own children To the elder, who was called Geoffrey, she gave the name of Gianotto di Procida, but did not change the name of the youngest. She acquainted Geoffrey with the necessity of this alteration, and to what danger he exposed himself by making himself known; and this she many times and earnestly impressed on his mind, and the boy very assiduously observed her injunctions. Thus badly clothed and worse shod, the two boys with their nurse for many years patiently endured their hard lot under the roof of Messer Gasparino. But Gianotto, who had now reached his sixteenth year, had too high a spirit to remain a menial Despising the baseness of servitude, he forsook the roof of Messer Gasparino, and entered on board a galley bound for Alexandria, and made many voyages, though without much advancement. At length, after the lapse of three or four years, being now full grown and of a handsome person, and having learnt that his father, whom he had considered as dead, was yet living though held in prison by King Charles, he despaired of bettering his condition, and wandering about, arrived at Lunigiana, and there by chance engaged himself in the service of Conrad Malespini, whose favour he soon won by his good conduct. He here frequently saw his mother, who still lived as a companion to Conrad's lady, though without recognising her; nor did she know her son again, time had so much changed them both since their separation. Whilst Gianotto was thus in the service of Conrad, it happened that a daughter of Conrad, whose name was Spina, the widow of one Nicolada Grignano, returned to her father's house. She was beautiful, and engaging, and young, being little more than sixteen years of age, and from the first time she saw Gianotto became deeply enamoured of him, which on his part was returned with an equal flame. This passion was indulged in by them for many months, unknown to all; but relying too much on their imagined security, and forgetting the precautions requisite on such

occasions, they were eventually surprised, first by the mother of the young lady, and afterwards by Conrad himself. Conrad was beyond measure grieved and exasperated at this discovery, and without further inquiry ordered his servants to place them in confinement in one of his castles, and in the first moment of his rage vowed to condemn them both to a shameful death. The mother of the lady, although she was irritated and considered her daughter highly deserving of punishment for the indulgence of her passion, yet having learned from some words of Conrad his intentions towards the culprits, she could not suffer the thoughts of exposing them to such danger, and instantly repaired to her husband, imploring him to set bounds to his wrath, and not, in his old age, to imbrue his hands in the blood of his child, but to satisfy his revenge by condemning them to imprisonment, and so letting them there atone for their offence. By these intercessions the lady at length altered her husband's mind, and he now ordered that they should be separately imprisoned, but without any comforts and on a restricted diet, until he should otherwise determine respecting them, which was accordingly done. Doomed to tears and captivity and wretched sustenance, they were thus left to deplore their unhappy lot.

A year had now passed over Gianotto and Spina in their prison without Conrad at all relenting, when it happened that Don Pedro, king of Arragon, by means of Messer Giandi Procida, caused an insurrection in Sicily, by which King Charles was suddenly dispossessed of that kingdom. This event was highly gratifying to Conrad, who was a Ghibelline; and Gianotto hearing this intelligence from one of his guards, heaved a deep sigh, and said, "Unhappy wretch that I am! fourteen years I have been wandering, anxiously expecting this event, and now that it comes, I am unable to avail myself of it, being confined in a prison from which I shall probably never escape with life." "How," said the guard, "can the affairs of monarchs concern you so nearly? What have you to do in Sicily?" "My heart," he replied, "is well-nigh broken when I think of the high station my father held there; for although I was but a child when we fled thence, I well remember him governor under King Manfred." "And who was your father?" said the guard. "My father," said Gianotto, "as I may now with safety deliver his name, is Arrighetto Capece, if he still lives, and my name is Geoffrey, and not Gianotto; and I doubt not that if I were now freed from prison, and could return to Sicily, I should have some place of authority bestowed on me." The honest guard, without any further inquiry, took the first opportunity of narrating this conversation to Conrad. Conrad seemed to hear it as a matter of indifference, but immediately repaired to Madonna Beritola, and courteously inquired if she had ever had a son by Arrighetto of the name of Geoffrey. The lady replied in tears that the elder of the two sons she had lost was so called, and that if he were living, he would be then twenty-two years of age. On hearing this, Conrad imagined this Gianotto must be the person, and it occurred to him that he might give a signal instance of his forgiveness, and at the same time preserve the reputation of his daughter, by

bestowing her in marriage on Geoffrey. He therefore commanded Gianotto to be secretly brought before him, and examined him minutely with regard to his past life; and finding, by undoubted proofs, that he was really the eldest son of Arrighetto Capece, he thus addressed him: "Gianotto, you are well aware of the injury you have done me with respect to my daughter, at a time when I relied on your fidelity and when you should have served me with truth and honour; and there are many persons who, under such circumstances, would have condemned you to an ignominious death, which compassion would not suffer in me. Now that you inform me that you are the son of noble parents, I am as anxious as you can be yourself to put an end to your sufferings, and to release you from the wretched captivity in which you have so long pined, and thus restore your honour and my own at the same time. Spina, for whom you have entertained such a fervent passion, you well know is a widow, and her dowry is great and noble; her qualities, and those of her father and mother, you are intimately acquainted with; of your present situation I say nothing. It is therefore my wish, that as before she was too much beloved of you, she should now become your wife, and in the quality of my children both you and she may, as long as you think well, remain with me" Long confinement had emaciated Gianotto, but had in no degree reduced his noble spirit, founded on the consciousness of his high birth, nor had it at all impaired the true affection he still bore to his fair friend, and although he earnestly desired what Conrad proposed, and saw himself wholly in his power, he fully maintained his noble bearing, and replied, "Conrad, neither love of authority, nor lust of gain, nor any other cause could induce me to become traitor to you or yours. It is true I loved your daughter, and love her still, and shall ever love her, since I consider her in every way worthy of my affection. That which you now offer me has long been the height of my desire, and if I had thought that you would have conceded it to me, I should long since have requested it of you, and it is now the more dear to me as it comes unexpected. But, if your intentions do not answer to your words, I pray you not to flatter me with vain hopes, but to remand me to my solitary prison and hard usage; for my love is such to Spina, that out of regard to her I shall always esteem you and hold you in reverence, whatever your conduct may be to me." Conrad was not a little astonished at the lofty spirit of Gianotto, and esteemed him the more for his unabated love to his daughter, and instantly rising, he kissed his cheeks and embraced him, and without further delay desired that Spina should be brought to him. Spina had become pale and feeble through her imprisonment, and was as much changed in appearance as Gianotto The nuptials, with the consent of all parties, and according to the usage of our Church, were immediately solemnised in the presence of Conrad; and after the lapse of a few days, having provided them with everything suitable, and their health being in some degree restored, it seemed to him high time to communicate the agreeable intelligence to their mothers. One day, therefore, addressing the goat-herdess, he said, "What would you think, madam, if I were to show you your

eldest son, lately married to one of my daughters?" To which the goat-herdess replied, "I can only say that it will add to the obligations I am now under to you, if that be possible, and the more so if you restore my son to me, who is dearer to me than my life; and rendering him to me in the manner you mention, it will bring back to me some portion of my lost hopes;" and with these words the tears streamed abundantly down her cheeks. Conrad then turning to his own wife, said, 'And you, dear love, what will you say if I show you such a son-in-law?" To which the lady answered, "What pleaseth you must satisfy me, be he a gentleman or a beggar." "Then," said Conrad, "I hope in the course of a few days to add to the happiness of you both." And the young couple having now recovered their good looks, and being suitably apparelled, Conrad said to Geoffrey, "Would it not add to your present joy to meet your long-lost mother here?" "I can hardly," replied Geoffrey, "persuade myself that she has escaped with life from the midst of her calamities, but such an event would be doubly acceptable to me, as by her good counsels it is possible our family might be restored to its former station in society." Conrad then sent for the ladies, and they were both not a little surprised and delighted to see the new-married couple, wondering what had so suddenly changed Conrad's resentment into affection and induced him to give his daughter to Gianotto. Madonna Beritola calling to mind the words of Conrad, began to regard her son, and natural instinct awakening in her some recollection of the features of her son, without waiting for any other confirmation, she ran to him, and caught him in her arms, and clasped him to her bosom; nor in the fulness of her maternal joy was she able to utter a word. Her spirits at last were so entirely entranced, that she fell as if dead into the arms of her son. He, too, was struck with astonishment, recollecting to have seen her many times before in the castle without recognising her; but the very transport of his heart assuring him that she was his mother, he now blamed himself for his long neglect of her, threw his arms around her, and kissed and embraced her with a flood of filial tears. Conrad's lady and Spina now ran to the assistance of Madonna Beritola, and having by their friendly assiduity recovered her, she again embraced her son with many tears and many tender words, and, overpowered with maternal love, kissed him a thousand times and more, he at the same time as strongly manifesting his filial affection. After many an interchange of joy, to the delight of the bystanders, they mutually related their past adventures to each other, and Conrad having communicated to his friends this new alliance in his family, and invited them to a magnificent feast on the occasion, Geoffrey addressing him, said, "Conrad, you have made me infinitely happy, and have conferred numerous favours on my honoured mother; but that at this joyful conclusion nothing may remain undone that it is in your power to effect, I have to entreat that you will further add to the felicity of my mother, and the guests, and myself, by sending for my brother, who is now a servant to Messer Gasparino d'Oria, who, as I have related to you, captured us both in his corsair bark on the seas, and afterwards I

will entreat you to despatch a messenger into Sicily, who may fully inform himself of the present state of that country, and make inquiries after my father, Arrighetto, whether he be dead or alive; and if he be living, whether he hold any place in authority under the government, and then return to us with all the information in his power." Conrad was so much pleased with this request of Geoffrey, that he immediately despatched two confidential persons to Genoa and Sicily. The envoy to Genoa soon found Messer Gasparino, and earnestly requested him, from Conrad, to send him the exiled youth and his nurse, detailing to him all that Conrad had done for the other son and his mother. Messer Gasparino was not a little surprised at this request, but said, "It will be a pleasure to me to gratify Messer Conrad's wishes to the utmost of my power. It is indeed true that I have had in my house for the last fourteen years the boy you mention, and a woman who has passed for his mother, both of whom I will freely deliver up to your master; but at the same time tell him from me to be cautious how he lends belief to the tales of Gianotto, who now, you say, calls himself Geoffrey, because he is more mischievous than he taketh him to be, and as I know by experience." Having thus given an honourable reception to the envoy, he secretly called the nurse to him, and examined her very minutely with regard to these transactions. The nurse having heard of the happy change in Sicily, and having learnt that Arrighetto was still living, now divested herself of all her former fears, and related everything as it had happened, and her reason for having so long concealed the truth. Messer Gasparino finding the story of the nurse to correspond with the account of Conrad's envoy, began to think the narrative true, and making all further search into the affair that his ingenuity could suggest, and finding everything to corroborate the story, and, moreover, reproaching himself for his hard usage of the boy, and knowing the high station which Arrighetto formerly held, and desiring to make him every reparation in his power, he gave him his only daughter, a beautiful girl of fifteen years of age, with a bountiful and honourable dower, in marriage. After some days' feasting, he went on board a well-armed galley, with the exiled youth, his daughter, the envoy, and the nurse, and sailed to Lerici, where they were received by Conrad, whose castle was not far from thence, and who conducted them to share in the grand entertainment. But the joy of the mother, having her second son thus restored to her, the meeting of the two brothers, the garrulous felicity of the old nurse, and the many congratulations paid to Gasparino and his daughter, and to Conrad, and his lady and daughter, I have not words to describe, and must leave it to yourselves to imagine. To complete this universal joy, God, who is a bountiful Giver when He beginneth, added the long-wished-for tidings concerning the life and good estate of Arrighetto Capece; for in the midst of the feast, when all the noble guests were seated at table, they were agreeably surprised with the return of the envoy to Sicily. He informed them that at the time of the late tumult the people ran to the castle, where Arrighetto was imprisoned by King Charles, and in a rage slew the guards, and set Arrighetto at liberty, and knowing him

to be implacably hostile to the king, they placed him at the head of their forces to assist in expelling and chasing out the French: that by this means he stood high in favour with the new king, who restored him to his honours and estates, and gave him a situation of high authority. He added that he himself had been received by Arrighetto with the highest honours, and that there were the greatest rejoicings in his house on hearing of his wife's and children's safety, of whom he had never heard since the hour of his imprisonment; and he moreover informed them that a fast-sailing bark was on its way thither, with a company of noble gentlemen from Arrighetto. On this there was a general rejoicing, and Conrad and his friends went out to meet the gentlemen, and invited them to partake of their entertainment. When they arrived, they recognised, to their great delight, Madonna Beritola and Geoffrey, and before sitting down to table, they saluted and returned their thanks to Conrad and his lady, on the part of Arrighetto, for the honour done to his wife and son, desiring them to command Arrighetto in everything in his power; then turning to Messer Gasparino (whose liberal favours came unlooked for), they assured him that when Arrighetto should hear of his kindness to the exiled youth, he too would receive as ample a testimony of his gratitude. After Conrad had held these rejoicings for several days, time seemed to call on Madonna Beritola and Geoffrey and the others to depart. Bidding adieu, therefore, with many tears, to Conrad and his lady, and to Messer Gasparino, they embarked on board the galley and set sail, and having a prosperous wind, soon reached Sicily. Madonna Beritola and her sons and their ladies were joyfully met by Arrighetto at Palermo, where they long lived happy and united, frequently returning thanks to God for the many mercies received at His hands.

SECOND DAY, NOVELLA VIII.

At the time when the Roman Empire passed from the French to the Germans, great dissensions arose between the two nations, which ultimately led to an exasperated and long-continued war. It was during this period that the king of France and his son called together their friends and confederates, and assembled their forces in order to protect their dominions and march against the common enemy. But before they set out on their expedition, they thought it incumbent on them to appoint a suitable governor of the kingdom in their absence, and knowing from experience the Count of Angiers to be a man of singular talents, as well as of undoubted loyalty, and although a man skilled in military affairs, yet, from his habits of life, not calculated to endure the fatigues of war, they appointed him viceroy of the whole realm of France, and then departed on their enterprise. The Count entered on his government with prudence, and conducted every department with talent, at the same time consulting on every occasion the

"So violently enamoured did he shortly become, that he purloined her glove, which he wore with her favourite colours wherever he went, at tilts and tourneys, at rich feasts and festivals, all of which he was proud to hold in honour of his love. yet all these failed to render him agreeable to the lady, a circumstance that caused our poor friend Galgano no little pain and perplexity. A prey to the excessive cruelty and indifference of one dearer to him than his own life, who neither noticed nor listened to him, he still followed her like her shadow, contriving to be near her at every party, whether a bridal or a christening, a funeral or a play. Long and vainly, with love-messages after love-messages, and presents after presents, did he sue; but never would the noble lady deign to receive or listen to them for a moment, ever bearing herself more reserved and harshly as he more earnestly pressed the ardour of his suit.

"It was thus his fate to remain subject to this very irksome and overwhelming passion, until, wearied out, at length he would break into words of grief and bitterness against his 'bosom's lord' 'Alas! dread master of my destiny,' he would say, 'O Love! can you behold me thus wasting my very soul away, ever loving but never beloved again? See to it, dread lord, that you are not, in so doing, offending against your own laws!' And so, unhappily dwelling upon the lady's cruelty, he seemed fast verging upon despair, then again humbly resigning himself to the yoke he bore, he resolved to await some interval of grace, watching, however vainly, for some occasion of rendering himself more pleasing to the object he adored.

"Now it happened that Messer Stricca and his consort went to pass some days at their country seat near Sienna; and it was not long before the love-sick Galgano was observed to cross their route, to hang upon their skirts, and to pass along the same way, always with the hawk upon his hand, as if violently set upon bird-hunting. Often, indeed, he passed so close to the villa where the lady dwelt, that one day being seen by Messer Stricca, who recognised him, he was very familiarly entreated to afford them the pleasure of his company; 'and I hope,' added Messer Stricca, 'that you will stay the evening with us' Thanking his friend very kindly for the invitation, Galgano, strange to say, at the same time begged to be held excused, pleading another appointment, which he believed—he was sorry—he was obliged to keep. 'Then,' added Messer Stricca, 'at least step in and take some little refreshment' to which the only reply returned was, 'A thousand thanks, and farewell, Messer Stricca, for I am in haste.' The moment the latter had turned his back, our poor lover began to upbraid himself bitterly for not availing himself of the invitation, exclaiming, 'What a wretch am I not to accept such an offer as this! I should at least have seen her—her whom from my soul I cannot help loving beyond all else in the world.'

"As he thus went, meditating upon the same subject along his solitary way, it chanced that he sprung a large jay, on which he instantly gave his hawk the wing, which pursuing its quarry into Messer Stricca's gardens, and there striking true, the ensuing struggle took place. Hearing the hawk's cry, both he and his lady ran towards

the garden balcony, in time to see, and were surprised at the skill and boldness of the bird in seizing and bringing down its game. Not in the least aware of the truth, the lady inquired of her husband to whom the bird belonged. 'Mark the hawk,' replied Messer Stricca; 'it does its work well; it resembles its master, who is one of the handsomest and most accomplished young men in Sienna, and a very excellent young fellow, too;—yes, it does well.' 'And who may that be?' said his wife, with a careless air. 'Who,' returned he, 'but the noble Galgano—the same, love, who just now passed by. I wished he would have come in to sup with us, but he would not. He is certainly one of the finest and best-tempered men I ever saw.' And so saying, he rose from the window, and they went to supper. Galgano, in the meanwhile, having given his hawk the call, quietly pursued his way; but the praises lavished upon him by her husband made an impression upon the lady's mind such as the whole of his previous solicitations had failed to produce. However strange, she dwelt upon them long and tenderly. It happened that about this very time, Messer Stricca was chosen ambassador from the Siennese to the people of Perugia, and setting out in all haste, he was compelled to take a sudden leave of his lady. I am sorry to have to observe that the moment the cavalcade was gone by, recalling the idea of her noble lover, the lady likewise despatched an embassy to our young friend, entreating him, after the example of her husband, to favour her with his company in the evening. No longer venturing to refuse, he sent a grateful answer back that he would very willingly attend. And having heard tidings of Messer Stricca's departure for Perugia, he set out at a favourable hour in the evening, and speedily arrived at the house of the lady to whom he had been so long and so vainly attached.

"Checking his steed in full career, he threw himself off, and the next moment found himself in her presence, falling at her feet and saluting her with the most respectful and graceful carriage. She took him joyously by the hand, bidding him a thousand tender welcomes, and setting before him the choicest fruits and refreshments of the season. Then inviting him to be seated, he was served with the greatest variety and splendour; and more delicious than all, the bright lady herself presided there, no longer frowning and turning away when he began to breathe the story of his love and sufferings into her ear. Delighted and surprised beyond his proudest hopes, Galgano was profuse in his expressions of gratitude and regard, though he could not quite conceal his wonder at this happy and unexpected change; entreating, at length, as a particular favour, that she would deign to acquaint him with its blessed cause. 'That will I do soon,' replied the glowing beauty; 'I will tell you every word, and therefore did I send for you;' and she looked into his face with a serene and pure yet somewhat mournful countenance. 'Indeed,' returned her lover, a little perplexed, 'words can never tell half of what I felt, dear lady, when I heard you had this morning sent for me, after having desired and followed you for so long a time in vain.' 'Listen to me, and I will tell you, Galgano; but first sit a little nearer to me, for, alas! I love you. A

few days ago, you know, you passed near our house when hawking, and my husband told me that he saw you, and invited you in to supper, but you would not come. At that moment your hawk sprang and pursued its prey, when seeing the noble bird make such a gallant fight, I inquired to whom it belonged, and my husband replied, 'To whom should it belong but to the most excellent young man in Sienna;' and that it did well to resemble you, as he had never met a more pleasing and accomplished gentleman. 'Did he—did he say that?' interrupted her lover. 'He did indeed, and much more, praising you to me over and over; until hearing it, and knowing the tenderness you have long borne me, I could not resist the temptation of sending for you hither;' and, half blushes, half tears, she confessed that he was no longer indifferent to her, and that such was the occasion of it. 'Can the whole of this be true?' exclaimed Galgano. 'Alas! too true,' she replied. 'I know not how it is, but I wish he had not praised you so.' After struggling with himself a few moments, the unhappy lover withdrew his hand from hers, saying, 'Now God forbid that I should do the least wrong to one who has so nobly expressed himself, and who has ever shown so much kindness and courtesy to me.' Then suddenly rising, as with an effort, from his seat, he took a gentle farewell of the lady, not without some tears shed on both sides; both loving yet respecting each other. Never afterwards did this noble youth allude to the affair in the slightest way, but always treated Messer Stricca with the utmost regard and reverence during his acquaintance with the family."

FIRST DAY, NOVELLA II.[1]

THE last story being thus happily brought to a conclusion, Saturnina in her turn began.—"It has indeed pleased me much, especially when

[1] This story, which has been imitated in the fourth tale of the fourth night of Straparola, is supposed to be of Eastern origin, and it has certainly a striking resemblance to one in the "Bahar Danush," a work compiled out of some of the oldest Brahmin traditions. It is, moreover, curious, as having, through the medium of a translation, suggested the idea of several of those amusing scenes in the "Merry Wives of Windsor," in which the renowned Falstaff acquaints Master Ford, disguised under the name of Brooke, with his progress in the good graces of Mrs. Ford. The contrivances, likewise, by which he eludes the vengeance of the jealous husband are similar to those recounted in the novel, with the addition of throwing the unwieldy knight into the river. Mr Dunlop informs us that the same story has been translated in a collection entitled "The Fortunate, Deceived, and Unfortunate Lovers," and that Shakespeare may probably also have seen it in Tarleton's "Newes out of Purgatorie," where the incidents related in the "Two Lovers of Pisa" are given according to Straparola's version of the story. But it must be confessed that our great English dramatist has improved upon the incidents in such a way as to give a still more humorous idea of the hero, whose adventures are the result only of a feigned regard on the part of Mistress Ford. Molière, too, would appear to have made a no less happy use of it than our inimitable dramatist in his "École des Femmes," where the humour of the piece turns upon a young gentleman confiding his progress in the affections of a lady to the ear of her guardian, who believed that he was on the point of espousing her himself. Two other French productions, entitled "Le Maitre en Droit," one of them from the pen of Fontaine, have also been drawn from the same source; and every one must be acquainted with that part of Gil Blas's history where Don Raphael confides to Balthazar the progress of his regard for his wife, and particularly dwells upon the vexatious behaviour he met with on the part of the gentleman, by his unexpected return home.—*Vide* Dunlop's "History of Fiction," vol. ii. p. 370.

to perceive that the student was smitten with her; upon which, Bucciolo, returning to his master, acquainted him with what he had done. 'I have learned as much as you ordered me, and found somebody I like very well.' 'So far good,' cried the professor, not a little amused at the sort of science to which his pupil thus seriously devoted himself, 'so far good'; and now mind what I have next to say to you. Take care to walk two or three times a day very respectfully before her house, casting your eyes about you in such a way that no one catch you staring in her face; but look in a modest and becoming manner, so that she cannot fail to perceive and to be struck with it. And then return to me, and this, sir, will be the second lesson in this gay science.' So the scholar went, and promenaded with great discretion before the lady's door, who certainly observed that he appeared to be passing to and fro out of respect to one of the inhabitants. This attracted her attention, for which Bucciolo very discreetly expressed his gratitude both by looks and bows, which being as often returned, the scholar began to be aware that the lady liked him. Upon this he immediately went and informed the professor of all that had passed, who replied, 'Come, you have done very well; I am hitherto quite satisfied. It is now time for you to find some way of speaking to her, which you may easily do by means of one of those gipsies who haunt the streets of Bologna crying ladies' veils, purses, and other rare articles to sell. Send word by her that you are the lady's most faithful, devoted servant, and that there is no one in the world you so much wish to please. In short, let her urge your suit, and take care to bring the answer to me as soon as you have received it; I will then tell you how you are to proceed.' Departing in all haste, he soon found a little old pedlar woman, quite perfect in her trade, to whom he said he should take it as a particular favour if she would do one thing, for which he would reward her handsomely. Upon this she declared her readiness to serve him in anything he pleased, 'for you know,' she continued, 'it is my business to get money in every way I can.' Bucciolo gave her two florins, saying, 'I wish you to go as far as the Via Maccarella for me to-day, where resides a young lady of the name of Giovanna, for whom I have the very highest regard. Pray tell her so, and recommend me to her most affectionately, so as to obtain for me her good graces by every means in your power. I entreat you to have my interest at heart, and to say such pretty things as she cannot refuse to hear.' 'Oh,' said the little old woman, 'leave that to me, sir; I will not fail to say a good word for you at the proper time.' 'Delay not,' said Bucciolo, 'but go now, and I will wait for you here;' and she set off immediately, taking a basket of her trinkets under her arm. On approaching the place, she saw the lady before the door enjoying the open air, and curtseying to her very low, 'Do I happen to have anything here you would fancy?' she said, displaying her treasures. 'Pray, take something, madam, whatever pleases you best.' Veils, stays, purses, and mirrors were now spread in the most tempting way before her eyes, as the old woman took her station at the lady's side. Out of all these, her attention appeared to be most attracted by a beautiful purse, which she observed, if she could afford, she should like to buy. 'Nay,

madam, do not think anything about the price,' exclaimed the little pedlar; 'take anything you please, for they are all paid for, I assure you.'

"Surprised at hearing this, and observing the very respectful manner of the speaker, the lady replied, 'Do you know what you are saying? what do you mean by that?' The old creature pretending now to be much affected, said, 'Well, madam, if it must be so, I will tell you. It is very true that a young gentlemen of the name of Bucciolo sent me hither, one who loves you better than all the world besides. There is nothing he would not do to please you, and indeed he appears so very wretched because he cannot speak to you, and he is so very good, that it is quite a pity. I think it will be the death of him; and then he is such a fine, such an elegant young man; the more is the pity.' On hearing this, the lady, blushing deeply, turned sharply round upon the little old hag, exclaiming, 'Oh, you wicked little creature! were it not for the sake of my own reputation, I would give you such a lesson, that you should remember it to the latest day of your life. A pretty story to come before decent people with! Are not you ashamed of yourself to let such words come out of your mouth?' Then seizing an iron bar that lay across the doorway, 'Ill betide you, little wretch,' she cried, as she brandished it; 'if you ever return this way again, you may depend upon it you will never go back alive!' The trembling old creature, quickly bundling up her pack, ran off, in dread of feeling that cruel weapon on her shoulders; nor did she once think of stopping till she had reached the place where Signor Bucciolo stood. Eagerly inquiring the news, and in what way she had prospered: 'Oh, very badly, very badly,' answered the little gipsy; 'I never was in such a fright in all my life. Why, she will neither see nor listen to you, and if I had not run away, I should have felt the weight of her hand upon my shoulders. For my own part, I shall go there no more,' chinking the two florins; 'and I would advise you to look to yourself how you proceed in such affairs in future.' Poor Bucciolo now became quite disconsolate, and returned in all haste to acquaint the professor with this unlucky result. But the tutor, not a whit cast down, consoled him, saying, 'Do not despair, Bucciolo; a tree is not levelled at a single stroke, you know. I think you must have a repetition of your lesson to-night.' So go and walk before her door as usual; notice how she eyes you, and whether she appears angry or not; and then come back again to me.' He proceeded without delay to the lady's house, who, the moment she perceived him, called her maid, giving her directions as follows: 'Quick, quick! hasten after that young man—that is he; and tell him from me that he must come and speak to me this evening without fail; yes, without fail.' The girl soon came up with Bucciolo. 'My lady, sir, my lady Giovanni would be glad of the pleasure of your company this evening; she would be very glad to speak to you.' Greatly surprised at this, Bucciolo replied, 'Tell your lady I shall be most happy to wait upon her;' and turning round, he set off once more to the professor, and reported the progress of the case. But this time his master looked a little more serious, for, from some trivial circumstances put together, he began to entertain suspicions, as it really

turned out, that the lady was no other than his own wife. So he rather anxiously inquired of Bucciolo whether he intended to accept the invitation. 'To be sure I do,' replied his pupil. 'Then promise,' rejoined the professor, 'that you will come here before you set off.' 'Certainly,' said Bucciolo, 'I will;' and he took his leave.

"Now, our hero was far from suspecting that the lady boasted so near a relationship to his beloved tutor, although the latter began to feel rather uneasy as to the result, feeling certain twinges of jealousy by no means pleasant. For he passed most of his winter evenings at the college, where he gave lectures, and not unfrequently remained there for the night. 'I should be sorry,' thought he, 'that this young gentleman were learning these things at my expense; and I must therefore know the real state of the case.' In the evening his pupil called again, saying, 'Worthy sir, I am now ready to go.' 'Well, go,' replied the professor; 'but be wise, Signor Bucciolo, be wise: think more than once what you are about.' 'Trust me for that,' replied the scholar, a little piqued; 'I shall go well provided, and not walk like a fool into the mouth of danger unarmed.' And away he went, furnished with a good cuirass, a rapier, and a stiletto in his belt. He was no sooner on his way than the professor slipped out quietly after him, following him close at his heels, and truly he saw him stop at his own door, which, on a pretty smart tap being given, was opened in a moment, and the pupil was admitted by the lady herself. When the professor saw that it was indeed his own wife, he was quite overwhelmed, saying in a faint voice to himself, 'Alas! I fear this young fellow has learned more than he confesses at my expense;' and making a cruel vow to revenge himself, he ran back to the college, where, arming himself with sword and knife, he hastened back in a terrible passion, with the intention of wreaking his vengeance on poor Bucciolo without delay. Arriving at his own door, he gave a pretty smart knock, which the lady, sitting before the fire with Bucciolo, instantly recognised for her husband's. So taking hold of Bucciolo, she concealed him in all haste under a heap of damp clothes lying on a table near the window ready for ironing; and this done, she ran to the door, and inquired who was there. 'Open, quick,' returned the professor; 'you vile woman, you shall soon know who I am.' On opening the door, she beheld him with a drawn sword, and exclaimed, 'Oh, my dearest life! what means this?' 'You know very well,' said he, 'what it means; the villain is now in the house.' 'Good heaven, what is it you say?' cried his wife; 'are you gone out of your wits? Come and search the house, and if you find anybody, I will give you leave to kill me on the spot. What! do you think I should now begin to misconduct myself as I never before did, as none of my family ever did before? Beware lest the evil one should be tempting you, and suddenly depriving you of your senses, drive you to perdition.'

"But the professor calling out for candles, began to search the house, from the cellars upwards, among the tubs and casks, in every place but the right one, running his sword through the beds and under the beds, and into every inch of the bedding, leaving no corner or crevice

of the whole house untouched. The lady accompanied him with a candle in her hand, frequently interrupting him with, 'Say your beads, say your beads, good sir: it is certain that the evil one is dealing with you; for were I half so bad as you esteem me, I would kill myself with my own hands. But I entreat you not to give way to his evil suggestions; oppose the adversary while you can.'

"Hearing these virtuous asseverations of his wife, and not being able to meet with any one after the strictest search, the professor began to think that he must indeed be possessed, and in a short time, extinguishing the lights, returned to his rooms. The lady, shutting the door upon him, called out to Bucciolo to come from his hiding-place, and stirring the fire, began to prepare a fine capon for supper, with some delicious wines and fruits. And thus they regaled themselves, highly entertained with each other; nor was it their least satisfaction that the professor had just left them, apparently convinced that they had learned nothing at his expense.

"Proceeding the next morning to college, Bucciolo, without the least suspicion of the truth, informed his master that he had something for his ear which he was sure would make him laugh. 'How, how so?' exclaimed the professor. 'Why,' returned his pupil, 'you must know that last night, just at the very time I was in the lady's house, who should come in but her husband, and in such a rage! He searched the whole house from top to bottom without being able to find me. I lay under a heap of newly-washed clothes,[1] which were not half dry. In short, the lady played her part so well, that the poor gentleman forthwith took his leave, and we afterwards ate a fine fat capon for supper, and drank such wines, and with such a zest! It was really one of the pleasantest evenings I ever spent in my life. But I think I will go and take a nap, for I promised to return again this afternoon about the same hour.' 'Then be sure before you go,' said the professor, trembling with suppressed rage, 'be sure to tell me when you set off.' 'Oh, certainly,' replied Bucciolo, and away he went. Such was now the unhappy tutor's condition as to render him incapable of delivering a single lecture during the whole day, and such his extreme vexation and desire to behold the evening, that he spent the whole time in arming himself cruelly with rapier, sword, and cuirass, dwelling only upon deeds of blood. At the appointed hour came Bucciolo with the utmost innocence, saying, 'My dear tutor, I am going now.' 'Yes, go,' replied the professor, 'and come back again to-morrow morning, if you can, to tell me how you have fared.' 'I intend to do so,' said Bucciolo, and departed at a brisk pace for the house of the lady. Armed cap-à-pie, the professor ran out after him, keeping pretty close at his heels, with the intention of catching him just as he entered. But the lady being on the watch, opened the door so quickly for the pupil, that she shut it in the master's face, who began to knock and to call out with a furious noise. Extinguishing the candle in a moment, the lady placed Bucciolo

[1] In the incident of the damp linen we have the original of Sir John Falstaff's happy contrivance in "The Merry Wives of Windsor," the story being well known to most of our early English dramatists.

behind the door, and throwing her arms round her husband's neck as he entered, motioned to her lover, while she thus held his enemy, to make his escape; and he, upon the husband rushing forwards, stepped out from behind the door unperceived. She then began to scream as loud as she could, 'Help, help! the professor is run mad! Will nobody help me?' for he was in an ungovernable rage, and she clung faster to him than before. The neighbours running to her assistance, and seeing the peaceable professor thus armed with all these deadly weapons, and his wife crying out, 'Help, for the love of Heaven; too much study hath driven him mad!' they really believed such to be the fact. 'Come, good master,' they said, 'what is all this? Try to compose yourself; nay, do not struggle so hard, but let us help you to your couch.' 'How can I rest, think you,' he replied, 'while this wicked woman harbours paramours in my house? I saw him come in with my own eyes.' 'Wretch that I am,' cried his wife, 'inquire of all my friends and neighbours whether any one of them ever saw anything the least unbecoming in my conduct.' The whole party, with one voice, entreated the master to lay such thoughts aside, for that there was not a better lady breathing, nor one who set a higher value upon her reputation. 'But how can that be,' said the tutor, 'when I saw him enter the house with my own eyes? and he is in it now.' In the meanwhile the lady's two brothers arrived, when she began to weep bitterly, exclaiming, 'Oh, my dear brothers! my poor husband is gone mad, quite mad, and he even says there is a man in the house! I believe he would kill me if he could; but you know me too well to listen a moment to such a story;' and she continued to weep. The brothers forthwith accosted the professor in no very gentle terms. 'We are surprised, we are shocked, sir, to find that you dare bestow such epithets on our sister; what can have led you, after living so amicably together, to bring these charges against her now?' 'I can only tell you,' replied the enraged professor, 'that there is a man in the house; I saw him.' 'Then come and let us find him; show him to us, for we will sift this matter to the bottom,' retorted the incensed brothers. 'Show us the man, and we will then punish her in such a way as will satisfy you!'

"One of them taking his sister aside, said, 'First tell me, have you really got any one hidden in the house? Tell the truth.' 'Heavens!' cried his sister; 'I tell you I would rather suffer death. Should I be the first to bring a scandal on our house? I wonder you are not ashamed to mention such a thing.' Rejoiced to hear this, the brothers, directed by the professor, immediately commenced a search. Half frantic, he led them directly to the great bundle of linen, which he pierced through and through with his sword, firmly believing he was killing Bucciolo all the while, taunting him at the same time at every blow. 'There! I told you,' cried his wife, 'he was quite mad; to think of destroying his own property thus! It is plain he did not help to get them up,' she continued, whimpering; 'all my best clothes.' Having now sought everywhere in vain, one of the brothers observed, 'He is indeed mad;' to which the other agreed, while he again attacked the professor in the bitterest terms. 'You have carried things

too far, sir; your conduct to our sister is shameful, nothing but insanity can excuse it.' Vexed enough before, the professor upon this flew into a violent passion, and brandished his naked sword in such a way that the others were obliged to use their sticks, which they did so very effectually, that after breaking them over his back, they chained him down like a madman upon the floor, declaring he had lost his wits by excessive study; and taking possession of his house, they remained with their sister the whole night. The next morning they sent for a physician, who ordered a couch to be placed as near as possible to the fire;[1] that no one should be allowed to speak or reply to the patient: and that he should be strictly dieted until he recovered his wits; and this regimen was diligently enforced.

"A report immediately spread throughout Bologna that the good professor had become insane, which caused very general regret, his friends observing to each other, 'It is indeed a bad business, but I suspected yesterday how it was: he could scarcely get a word out as he was delivering his lecture; did you perceive?' 'Yes, I saw him change colour, poor fellow,' and everywhere, by everybody, it was decided that the professor was mad. In this situation numbers of his scholars went to see him, and among the rest Bucciolo, knowing nothing of what had passed, agreed to accompany them to the college, desirous of acquainting his master with his last night's exploit. What was his surprise to learn that he had actually taken leave of his senses; and being directed, on leaving the college, to the professor's house, he was almost panic-struck on approaching the place, beginning to comprehend the whole affair. Yet in order that no one might be led to suspect the real truth, he walked into the house along with the rest, and on reaching a certain apartment which he knew, he beheld his poor tutor, almost beaten to a mummy and chained down upon his bed close to the fire. His pupils were standing round condoling with him and lamenting his piteous case. At length it came to Bucciolo's turn to say something to him, which he did as follows. 'My dear master, I am as truly concerned for you as if you were my own father; and if there is anything in which I can be of use to you, command me as your own son.' To this the poor professor only replied, 'No, Bucciolo, depart in peace, my pupil, depart, for you have learned much, very much, at my expense.' Here his wife interrupted him: 'You see how he wanders, heed not what he says; pay no attention to him, Signor.' Bucciolo, however, prepared to depart, and taking a hasty leave of the professor, he ran to the lodgings of his relation, Pietro Paolo, saying, 'Fare you well! God bless you, my friend! I must away to Rome, for I have lately learned so much at other people's expense that I am going home;' and he hurried away, and fortunately arrived safely at Rome."

[1] This manner of treating their crazy patients in a high fever must give our modern physicians a strange notion of the tactics of their ancient brethren, and a good opinion of themselves.

FOURTH DAY, NOVELLA II.[1]

THE last tale being concluded, it was observed by Friar Aurelio that it was really one of the most exquisite stories he had ever heard, far surpassing any which had been told. "I shall, nevertheless, venture to narrate one which I think will afford you some pleasure, though I cannot pretend either to invent or to repeat so good a one as yours.

"There lived in Provence, not many years ago, a gentleman of the name of Carsivalo, the lord of many castles, possessed of rare courage and prudence, and highly esteemed by the other chiefs and barons in the surrounding country. He was descended from a noble and ancient family, of the house of Balzo, and had an only daughter of the name of Lisetta, celebrated for her extreme beauty and accomplishments above all ladies of her time. Many were the lords, counts, and barons, both young and valiant, sighing suitors for her regard. But on none had her sire, Carsivalo, yet cast his eye whom he altogether approved, and he therefore refused them all. In the same province resided the Count Aldobrandino, lord of the whole of Venisi, comprehending many cities and castles. He was upwards of seventy years of age, had no wife or children, and was extremely rich. Struck with the beauty of his friend Carsivalo's daughter, the Count grew at length enamoured of her, and very willingly would he have led her to the altar, had he not felt ashamed, at his years, of suing to her, while so many bold and handsome youths were struggling for her in vain; wherefore he devoured his love in secret, not knowing what measures to pursue.

"Now it so happened that holding a festival at which his friend Carsivalo, ever forward to express his fidelity and devotion to him, was present, the old Count lavished upon him the most gratifying marks of regard, presenting him at the same time with noble steeds, birds, and hounds, besides other proofs of his favour. After this, he one day began to summon resolution to request his daughter from him, as it were in jest, while he and Carsivalo sat over their wine together. This he did in the following manner, assuming as youthful an air and countenance as he well could: 'I will tell you what I have been thinking of, my dear friend, without the least reservation in the world; for with you, indeed, I can have no secrets; and there is perhaps only one thing which I need to care about, which is, that I am not quite so fresh and hearty as I have been, but yet that is not much; and be it what it may, I will even tell you I should be glad, if you have no objection, to take your daughter's hand in marriage.—I should like to have her for a wife.' 'And I am sure,' answered Carsivalo, 'I would very willingly give her to you, my friend; only it might appear somewhat strange, considering the number of young fellows who are in pursuit of her, from eighteen to twenty years of age, and who might all join in falling upon me or becoming my enemies for ever. Besides, there are her mother, brothers, cousins,

[1] A portion of the above story appears to have been suggested by the fifteenth tale of Sacchetti, and it [illegible] were to be traced in the celebrated collection [illegible]

revealed to him the affair which he had in hand. Ricciardo replied, 'I was sent by my royal master, to act in whatever capacity might be most agreeable to you. give your orders, therefore, it is mine to execute them manfully' 'Then hear me,' said the Count. 'We are preparing to give a tournament at Marseilles, in which it is my wish you should carry all before you, until I ride into the field, when I will engage you, and you must suffer yourself to be vanquished, so that I may remain victor of the day.' Ricciardo said that it was his duty, however hard, to submit; and he continued privately at the castle until the hour arrived, when the old Count again accosted him: 'Take this suit of armour, and go to Marseilles, and give out that you are a rich traveller, with steeds and money at will, and so conduct yourself like a valiant knight.' 'You may leave that to me,' returned Ricciardo; and he went out and cast his eye over the whole of the Count's stud, where he found a horse that had not been mounted for several months, on which he suddenly vaulted, taking along with him what company he pleased. And he bent his way towards Marseilles, where he found the most splendid preparations made for the tournament. Thither were already gathered many of his young competitors, and blithe and proud was he who appeared more terribly beautiful than his compeers, while hautboys and trumpets everywhere sounded a shrill alarm, and the whole air seemed to be filled with music. Spacious was the plain staked out on which their respective prowess was to be displayed, and gay were the numerous balconies lifted up into the air around, with ladies and their lords and tender maidens watching the fearful odds of the field. And the fair and lovely girl, the wished-for prize, was led forth on the first of May, distinguished above all her companions for her beauty and accomplishments And now also rode forth her noble lovers, shining in arms, into the field, bearing various colours and devices, where, turn by turn, they assaulted each other with the most jealous rage. Among these Ricciardo was everywhere seen opening himself a passage upon his fierce steed, and ever, as most experienced in feats of arms, did he come off the victor. Tremendous in assault and skilful in defence, by his rapid motions he showed himself a complete master of his art. Every tongue was loud in his praise, inquiring who he could be? The answer was, 'A strange knight, who lately rode into the field.' Still victorious, his competitors retired on all sides, unable to sustain the ferocity of his attack. In a few moments Count Aldobrandino entered the lists, armed cap-à-pie, and running full tilt at Ricciardo, trumpets sounding and handkerchiefs waving, he met him in mid career. After some blows dealt, as had been agreed upon, on both sides, the young hero appeared to quail under the Count's sword, and having already seen the fair Lisetta, never had he done anything with so ill a grace before But he was bound to obey his sovereign's good pleasure, and consequently that of the Count, who was now riding victorious over the ground with his sword unsheathed, his squires and other followers hailing him with shouts of triumph, the conqueror of the day.

"What, then, was the surprise of the spectators when he raised his

EIGHTH DAY, NOVELLA I.

MEETING on the eighth day at their usual spot, and it being the lady's turn, the fair Saturnina thus began: "I am now about to enter upon a subject of a more high and moral nature than we have hitherto, my dear Auretto, attempted, embracing the origin of the faction between the Guelf and the Ghibelline, and the manner in which the same pestiferous spirit of party spread itself into Italy, our own beloved country, as we have too fatally witnessed.[1]

"There formerly resided in Germany two wealthy and well-born individuals, whose names were Guelfo and Ghibellino, very near neighbours, and greatly attached to each other. But returning together one day from the chase, there unfortunately arose some difference of opinion as to the merits of one of their hounds, which was maintained on both sides so very warmly, that from being almost inseparable friends and companions, they became each other's deadliest enemies. This unlucky division between them still increasing, they on either side collected parties of their followers, in order more effectually to annoy each other. Soon extending its malignant influence among the neighbouring lords and barons of Germany, who divided, according to their motives, either with the Guelf or the Ghibelline, it not only produced many serious affrays, but several persons fell victims to its rage. Ghibellino, finding himself hard pressed by his enemy, and unable longer to keep the field against him, resolved to apply for assistance to Frederick the First, the reigning emperor. Upon this, Guelfo, perceiving that his adversary sought the alliance of this monarch, applied on his side to Pope Honorius II., who being at variance with the former, and hearing how the affair stood, immediately joined the cause of the Guelfs, the Emperor having already embraced that of the Ghibellines. It is thus that the Apostolic See became connected with the former, and the Empire with the latter faction; and it was thus that a vile hound became the origin of a deadly hatred between the two noble families. Now it happened that in the year of our dear Lord and Redeemer 1215, the same pestiferous spirit spread itself into parts of Italy in the following manner. Messer Guido Orlando being at that time chief magistrate of Florence, there likewise resided in that city a noble and valiant cavalier of the family of Buondelmonti, one of the most distinguished houses in the state. Our young Buondelmonte having already plighted his troth to a lady of the Amidei family, the lovers were considered as betrothed, with all the solemnity usually observed on such occasions. But this unfortunate young man, chancing one day to pass by the house of the Donati, was stopped and accosted by a lady of the name of Lapaccia, who moved to him from her door as he went along, saying: 'I am surprised that a gentleman of your appearance, Signor, should think of taking for his wife a woman scarcely worthy of handing him his

[1] Those stories, observes Mr. Dunlop, that recount the dissensions of Florence, are strikingly illustrative of its situation, of the character of its principal inhabitants, and of the factions by which it was distracted.

boots There is a child of my own, whom, to speak sincerely, I have long intended for you, and whom I wish you would just venture to see' And on this she called out for her daughter, whose name was Ciulla, one of the prettiest and most enchanting girls in all Florence. Introducing her to Messer Buondelmonte, she whispered, 'This is she whom I had reserved for you;' and the young Florentine suddenly becoming enamoured of her, thus replied to her mother: 'I am quite ready, Madonna, to meet your wishes;' and before stirring from the spot he placed a ring upon her finger, and wedding her, received her there as his wife.

"The Amidei hearing that young Buondelmonte had thus espoused another, immediately met together and took counsel with other friends and relations how they might best avenge themselves for such an insult offered to their house. There were present among the rest Lambertuccio Amidei, Schiatta Ruberti, and Mosca Lamberti, one of whom proposed to give him a box on the ear, another to strike him in the face, yet they were none of them able to agree about it among themselves. On observing this, Mosca hastily rose, in a great passion, saying: 'Cosa fatta capo ha,' wishing it to be understood that a dead man will never strike again. It was therefore decided that he should be put to death, a sentence which they proceeded to execute in the following manner:—

"M. Buondelmonte returning one Easter morning from a visit to the Casa Bardi, beyond the Arno, mounted upon a snow-white steed, and dressed in a mantle of the same colour, had just reached the foot of the Ponte Vecchio, or old bridge, where formerly stood a statue of Mars, whom the Florentines in their Pagan state were accustomed to worship, when the whole party issued out upon him, and dragging him in the scuffle from his horse, in spite of the gallant resistance he made, despatched him with a thousand wounds. The tidings of this affair seemed to throw all Florence into confusion; the chief personages and noblest families in the place everywhere meeting and dividing themselves into parties in consequence; the one part embracing the cause of the Buondelmonti, who placed themselves at the head of the Guelfs; and the other taking part with the Amidei, who supported the Ghibellines.[1]

"In the same fatal manner, nearly all the seigniories and cities of Italy were involved in the original quarrel between these two German families. the Guelfs still supporting the interest of the Holy Church and the Ghibellines those of the Emperor. And thus I have made you acquainted with the origin of the Germanic faction between two noble houses, for the sake of a vile cur, and have shown how it afterwards disturbed the peace of Italy for the sake of a beautiful woman'

[1] In the original the novelist here proceeds to record the names, at great length, of the families who ranged themselves under the respective party banners.

THIRTEENTH DAY, NOVELLA I.

IN the city of Pistoia, at the time of its greatest splendour, there flourished a noble family called the Cancellieri, derived from Messer Cancelliere, who had enriched himself with his commercial transactions. He had numerous sons by two wives, and they were all entitled by their wealth to assume the title of Cavalieri, valiant and worthy men, and in all their actions magnanimous and courteous. And so fast did the various branches of this family spread, that in a short time they numbered a hundred men-at-arms, and being superior to every other both in wealth and power, would have still increased, but that a cruel division arose between them from some rivalship in the affections of a lovely and enchanting girl, and from angry words they proceeded to more angry blows. Separating into two parties, those descended from the first wife took the title of Cancellieri Bianchi, and the others, who were the offspring of the second marriage, were called Cancellieri Negri.

Having at last come to action, the Neri were defeated, and wishing to adjust the affair as well as they yet could, they sent their relation who had offended the opposite party to entreat forgiveness on the part of the Neri, expecting that such submissive conduct would meet with the compassion it deserved. On arriving in the presence of the Bianchi, who conceived themselves the offended party, the young man, on bended knees, appealed to their feelings for forgiveness, observing that he had placed himself in their power, that so they might inflict what punishment they judged proper; when several of the younger members of the offended party seizing on him, dragged him into an adjoining stable, and ordered that his right hand should be severed from his body. In the utmost terror the youth, with tears in his eyes, besought them to have mercy, and to take a greater and nobler revenge, by pardoning one whom they had it in their power thus deeply to injure. But, heedless of his prayers, they bound his hand by force upon the manger, and struck it off, a deed which excited the utmost tumult throughout Pistoia, and such indignation and reproaches from the injured party of the Neri as to implicate the whole city in a division of interests between them and the Bianchi, which led to many desperate encounters.

The citizens, fearful lest the faction might cause insurrections throughout the whole territory, in conjunction with the Guelfs, applied to the Florentines in order to reconcile them; on which the Florentines took possession of the place, and sent the partisans on both sides to the confines of Florence, whence it happened that the Neri sought refuge in the house of the Frescobaldi, and the Bianchi in that of the Cerchi nel Garbo, owing to the relationship which existed between them. The seeds of the same dissension being thus sown in Florence, the whole city became divided, the Cerchi espousing the interests of the Bianchi, and the Donati those of the Neri.

So rapidly did this pestiferous spirit gain ground in Florence, as frequently to excite the greatest tumult; and from a peaceable and

flourishing state, it speedily became a scene of rapine and devastation. In this stage Pope Boniface VIII. was made acquainted with the state of this ravaged and unhappy city, and sent the Cardinal Acqua Sparta on a mission to reform and pacify the enraged parties But with his utmost efforts he was unable to make any impression, and accordingly, after declaring the place excommunicated, departed. Florence being thus exposed to the greatest perils and in a continued state of insurrection, Messer Corso Donati, with the Spini, the Pazzi, the Tosinghi, the Cavicciuli, and the populace attached to the Neri faction, applied, with the consent of their leaders, to Pope Boniface. They entreated that he would employ his interest with the court of France to send a force to allay these feuds and to quell the party of the Bianchi. As soon as this was reported in the city, Messer Donati was banished and his property forfeited, and the other heads of the sect were proportionally fined and sent into exile. Messer Donati arriving at Rome, so far prevailed with his Holiness that he sent an embassy to Charles de Valois, brother to the king of France, declaring his wish that he should be made Emperor, and king of the Romans; under which persuasion Charles passed into Italy, reinstating Messer Donati and the Neri in the city of Florence. From this there only resulted worse evils, inasmuch as all the Bianchi, being the least powerful, were universally oppressed and robbed, and Charles becoming the enemy of Pope Boniface, conspired his death, because the Pope had not fulfilled his promise of presenting him with an imperial crown. From which events it may be seen that this vile faction was the cause of discord in the cities of Florence and Pistoia, and of the other states of Tuscany; and no less to the same source was to be attributed the death of Pope Boniface VIII

Novels of Massuccio Salernitano.

MASSUCCIO SALERNITANO.[1]

THE next in the series of Italian novelists whose merit best entitles him to succeed Ser Giovanni is an author who, like him, received the name of the place which gave him birth. For though it is certain he traced his family origin to Salerno, and was always esteemed a Neapolitan by his contemporaries, we are neither informed who, nor of what rank and situation in life, he really was. Nearly all the particulars, indeed, relating to his life and character, are rather to be inferred from the historical incidents and notices contained in his novels than from any biographical details. From these it is clear that he flourished during the latter half of the fifteenth century, terminated his career about its close, and composed his work entitled "Il Novellino," as nearly as we can learn from the same source, somewhere about the year 1470. In his forty-sixth novel, for instance, forming one of our present selection, he treats of the enterprises of Don Alphonso V., king of Portugal, against the Moors, as those of a contemporary prince, and in particular alludes to the capture of Arzilla as an exploit recently performed. Now this is an historical event which occurred precisely in the year 1470; and in the same manner we may observe that our novelist commemorates several other princes and commanders, more especially of the family of Severino, who distinguished themselves during that age. Among these he mentions one of the name of Roberto, whose merits are particularly recorded in the close of his "Novellino;" the same on whom King Ferdinand conferred the principality of Salerno, wresting it from one of the Orsini family for this purpose. From similar reasoning we might believe Massuccio to have sprung from noble parents, occasional references being made likewise to this subject. The fourteenth novel thus makes mention of Messer Tomaso Miraconda, the author's grandfather, as a noble and respected cavalier; and a great number of his stories are familiarly addressed in the outset to different lords and princes, such as the Sanseverini, the Carracciuoli, and others. Among his more intimate acquaintance were Zaccheria Barbaro and Giorgio Contarino, Count of Zaffo, two Venetian gentlemen. He is known likewise to have maintained a correspondence with the principal literary characters of his times, as we gather from some of the novels which he sent to Pontanó, to Panormita, and other literary men. He was for some time in the service of one of the Visconti, then Duke of Milan, a circumstance

[1] Il Novellino: nel quale si contengono cinquanta Novelle in cinque parti divise. 1492.

mentioned by the author in his eleventh story, where he addresses him by the name of his lord and patron. Some distinguished lady is also celebrated as "the tutelary angel, the light of this our Italic region," to whose auspices Massuccio commends his entire work, but whose title of Serene Highness has not been sufficient to designate with precision the individual upon whom the novelist has lavished such high commendation. It is conjectured, however, from the author's own allusions, that she was either one of the consorts of King Giovanni of Sicily, or Isabella, the wife of his son Carlo.

It has been asserted by some critics that Massuccio could have been no other than the Massuccio Guardato alluded to by Mazzella in his description of Naples, and of the same opinion is Nicodemi, the supposed author of the additions to the "Biblioteca Napoletana" of Toppi. However this may be, nearly all his stories are of an historical character, founded upon incidents either of a domestic or public nature, which circumstance, added to their mode of relation, conveys a strong impression of their reality and truth. Though their style is extremely awkward and perplexed, there is a sincerity and earnestness of manner which seem to place the author above the charge of imitation, and inspire a stronger feeling than usually results from a mere fictitious narrative. We have, moreover, the solemn but somewhat whimsical assurance of their veracity in the author's own words, taking "Heaven to witness that the whole of them are a faithful narrative of events occurring during his own times." This, however, ought to be taken with some grains of allowance, as it cannot be supposed to include the framework and the more ornamental portions of his novels, which it always lies within the discretion of the novelist to manage so as best to awaken the interest or surprise of his readers. However much in this respect may be granted to the dramatic art and ingenuity with which Massuccio arranges his stories, he cannot boast the additional merit of a pure and easy style, possessed by so many of his predecessors. His language is sometimes indeed strangely diffuse and involved, and written nearly in a pure Neapolitan dialect, by no means to be held up as a model. Yet he assumes in the person of Mercury the merit of having always imitated the beautiful and ornamental manner of the great poet and orator Boccaccio. We are informed by Doni that, probably with this view, he commented upon the whole of the first day of the "Decameron." Had he flourished at an earlier period, he would doubtless have acquired a still higher character as a novelist than he now enjoys. He occasionally indulges a strong vein of ridicule in his incidents and descriptions at the expense of the ecclesiastics; and in this portion of his stories are contained some of the author's happiest efforts. His title to originality has never been disputed, and the commendation bestowed upon him by Doni in his "Librerie" appears, as far as we can judge, to have been well merited: "Hail then to the name of Salernitano, who, scorning to borrow even a single word from Boccaccio, has produced a work which he may justly regard as his own." The character of originality, however, will scarcely extend to the plot of his "Mariotto and Giannozza," forming the thirty-second novel of his series, which

must evidently have been taken from the old traditionary tale, traced as far back as Xenophon Ephesius, and both versified and dramatised long before the time of Massuccio. Yet he has the merit of having produced a beautiful novel out of the naked materials afforded him by the annals of his country, and he has the additional merit of having furnished a model for the more finished productions of Luigi da Porto and of our own Shakespeare. It is for this reason that the translator has not ventured to omit either of the Italian novels, though relating precisely to the same subject; that of Massuccio being the prototype of nearly all the succeeding imitations in different countries, and the other, from the pen of Da Porto, being entitled to insertion from the superior manner in which it is told. This last, imitated from Massuccio, was again copied by Bandello, and from him it was inserted in Belleforest's collection of tragic tales, and in this country in Paynter's "Palace of Pleasure."

As the origin, then, of so many other productions, and the ultimate source from which Shakespeare drew his "Romeo and Juliet," it would scarcely have been justifiable to have passed over the novel of Massuccio in a selection like the present. It is most probable that Shakespeare only obtained access to the work through the medium of some metrical histories, often wretched and corrupt versions of the Italian novels. The incidents of the story in the English drama, when compared with the original, do not appear to have been much improved upon, an observation which will apply to all the plots of Shakespeare drawn from Italian sources; and it is only to the magical charm of his language and sentiments, and to his power of swaying the passions at his will, that we are to ascribe his superiority

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NOVELLA XX.

NOT many years ago there resided in Salerno a youth whose name was Giacomo Pinto, who, though of noble descent, and dwelling in the vicinity of Porta Nuova, where the academy of sense belonging to our city was commonly supposed to hold its sittings, would have found a much more suitable habitation in the heights of our mountain district, where nearly all of our ancient families are said first to have drawn their breath. Now, though overburdened neither with wealth nor discretion, our hero was not wanting in a certain noble ambition, which spurred him on to lay siege to the affections of a young and pretty widow related to our fellow-citizen Stradico. This, his first love, he contrived to conceal in such a manner, that not a child in all Salerno failed to perceive it, furnishing the most agreeable scandal to every party in the place. In fact, he became the butt of all his acquaintance; but their darts were less keen than those of love, and, heedless of their point, he pursued his enterprise with a fervour and perseverance worthy of his ancestors.

Among others residing near him who most amused themselves with observing the daily proofs of his folly during the progress of the siege,

was a gentleman of the name of Loisi Pagano, whose great penetration and pleasing manners winning poor Giacomo's entire confidence, the latter often entertained him with the history of this his cruel passion. Perceiving the extravagant turn it had taken, Loisi began to think how he might employ the enamoured wight's folly to some useful purpose in chastising the conceit of a certain upstart in Salerno who took the name of Messer Angelo, and who, though only a farrier, had assumed the profession of a physician, trafficking in different parts of Italy, whence he returned home with the spoil of his dead patients. Conversing one day with Giacomo on the same eternal subject, he addressed the lover as follows: "You must surely, my dear friend, care very little about the sufferings you talk of, when you might so easily put an end to them. You know Messer Angelo is one of the greatest conjurors in the world, and I can give you a proof of it, inasmuch as I have happily consulted him on many occasions, and never been deceived He is, moreover, your relation on the mother's side. Why not hasten to him, and prevail upon him with a little pleasing flattery to exercise his art in your favour, by which you will infallibly arrive at the object of your wishes? Or if he should think of imposing upon you, as he has most probably done upon many others, you can give him such a lesson in return as will teach him how to behave to gentlemen in future, and remember you ever after." Great was the joy and gratitude evinced by Giacomo on hearing these words, and flattering himself with the happiest results, he promised to do everything required of him His friend Loisi then excusing himself, lost no time in finding Messer Angelo, to whom he communicated his plan with no slight pleasure, thinking of the sport they were about to have Little did Messer Angelo suppose, as he stood laughing, with what satisfaction Loisi was anticipating his chastisement, while he made poor Giacomo his dupe, and arranged measures before parting for executing their roguish scheme.

Not long afterwards the lover despatched a messenger for Messer Angelo, and told him in a lamentable voice his grand secret, already known to everybody in the place, how sadly he pined in love, concluding, with many sighs: "You know, my good uncle, a friend in need is a friend indeed; and I have been informed that you are a great magician, whose infinite skill, if you please, can easily deliver me from all my pains; and so I beseech you, in the name of Heaven, that you will take pity on me, that I may obtain the dear object of my wishes, and owe my life and everything I have to you alone.' With a cheerful countenance, Messer Angelo replied he should be happy to do anything in his power to serve him, and, among other things, at last addressed him thus "But, my dear Giacomo, I am somewhat fearful of the result, as my plan would require, on your part, the utmost resolution and courage." "Only tell me what it is," cried the lover, "for I declare I am ready to descend into the infernal regions if necessary; such is the strength of my love." "Nay,' answered he, "it is worse, than that; for the truth is, you will have to hold a dialogue, face to face, with a ferocious demon called Barabas, the only one whom I have it at present in my power to summon for my commands."

"Well," continued Giacomo, "I will, if you please, speak to Satan himself, who is greater, you know; that is, if it be necessary." "Heaven grant you courage!" cried the conjuror; "but how are we to get the proper implements for the work? We must have a sword that has despatched a man, in the first place." "Oh, I can get one of my brother's that has killed ten in its time," cried Giacomo. "Well, that is the most important," replied Messer Angelo; "we can easily provide the rest. However, let there be in readiness when I ask for them a black and well-fed wether lamb and four fat capons, and check your impatience till the moon is in her wane. Leave the rest to me, for I promise you, you shall have the lady in your own hands, for better or worse, whichever you please."

Overjoyed with such an offer, Giacomo vowed to have everything in readiness as the necromancer had pointed out; who then repaired to Loisi, informing him of what had been fixed upon, in order to obviate any mistake that might arise. Often did they amuse themselves, before proceeding to work, with the simplicity of Giacomo, who hardly ever ceased for three days to tease the conjuror to commence the ceremonies. "Well, for my part, I am quite ready now," exclaimed Angelo, "but have you prepared what I enjoined you?" "To be sure I have," returned Giacomo, "and think myself very lucky too, for I have got the finest capons you ever saw from my lady cousin; and, better still, I can show you a young wether as fat as a bull, jet black, with four great horns, enough to frighten you to look at." Quite delighted, Messer Angelo observed, "Indeed, cousin, I hardly know you; love has so sharpened all your faculties at once. No one else could possibly have got together all the things requisite so very soon; but to-night shall reward you. I will put everything in order, and call for you when I set out."

Angelo then returned to Loisi, to tell him where he was to expect them, as all was fixed. It was no sooner night than the conjuror adjourned to the house of the lover, saying, "Would you like to come? It is quite time." He was answered in the affirmative; and seizing the homicidal sword, and placing the fat lamb on his shoulder, and a capon under each arm, he conducted the devoted lover into the midst of some awful ruins, where Loisi lay concealed accompanied by several friends, in order not to engross the whole scene to himself. Here Messer Angelo, turning towards Giacomo, said, "Take notice, my friend, we are now advanced too far to think of retreating without the most imminent risk; so look you do not flinch, and above all, beware how you call on the Lord or the Virgin: aye, or confess yourself either, for we should all sink down together into the bottomless pit. But if you should feel some qualms of fear (and how can you help it?), address yourself to the Redeemer, for you will want one, and we may perhaps escape the wiles of the wicked one" This our hero promised to do if possible, and the great necromancer then proceeded "You must repeat after me exactly what I say, and when we have conjured him up, Barabas will give a loud cry, saying, 'Now, give me my supper,' and then throw the capons at him to stop his mouth, and send the wether after them when the great horned beast roars out." This the

lover promised manfully to perform, and the order being given, out sprung the murderous sword, drawing a vast circle on the ground, and strange hieroglyphics within, while strong sulphurous perfumes rose on all sides, and incantations dire, and contortions of hands and eyes were seen. "Put your left leg into the circle this moment, Giacomo, and tell me whether you would rather see him in all his horrors face to face, or hear him speak from the old castle window yonder." The poor lover, whose simplicity had brought him with such vast courage into the dilemma, hearing such an awful commencement, began to tremble, saying, "It would perhaps be enough at first to hear him speak;" advancing his foot at the same time into the circle, and, against the agreement, recommending himself to every saint in heaven. His master, perceiving that he already thought himself transported into the other world, ordered him three times to pronounce the name of Barabas: the first only of which he effectually did. Loisi, in the disguise of the wicked one, then threw up a blaze of fire with a noise like thunder, enough to frighten the stoutest heart. Whether Giacomo wished himself at home again there is little need to inquire; but, encouraged by the conjuror, he called out a second time, when a greater conflagration than before met his view. Though his master failed not to observe the poor lover half dead with fear, he still urged him on, saying, "Fear nothing; the monster is well bound; he can do you no harm; so call him lustily for the third time," which, with the utmost exertion, he did; but in so faint a voice that it was scarcely heard. Loisi, on this, having sent up a third fiery signal, uttered a terrible yell, that nearly put an end to the poor lover's life. But the master, reminding him that the demon was bound, bade Giacòmo stand firm and repeat the invocation exactly as he told him. When he tried to speak, his heart beat so violently that he could scarcely support himself; and Messer Angelo, fearing lest he had already carried things too far, began to lecture Barabas for being so very outrageous. But Loisi and his companions, almost dead with laughter, perceiving that the conjuror did not proceed, fearful of losing their sport, called out fiercely for the fat lamb and everything they had. Then Messer Angelo, turning to the trembling lover, cried, "Throw him everything you have, and fly for your life, without ever looking behind you." No sooner did Giacomo, who truly felt as if he were got into the wrong world, hear these joyous words, than flinging capons, lamb, and everything else into the demon's den, he took to his legs at a speed that defied all pursuit.

After he had arrived with some difficulty at home, Messer Angelo soon joined him, saying, "Well, what think you of my necromantic art? Come, speak; be of good cheer; we shall finish the business next time." "Say no more about it," cried Giacomo faintly; "I would not go back with you for worlds; so find some other way of conjuring the lady for me, and I shall be eternally obliged to you." "Well, be it so," returned Angelo; "I am determined you shall succeed, and will do everything in my power to serve you." On which he left him to repose. Loisi, in the meanwhile, having taken the animals offered to him by way of oblation, dismissed his companions

and betook himself to rest. The next day he resolved to give a splendid feast, with the help of these and other good things, in honour of Giacomo and the friends who had witnessed the preceding scene. The dinner-hour being arrived, not a guest could refrain from laughter when Giacomo with great solemnity entered the room. Whispers, peals of laughter, and "Barabas, Barabas! make way for Barabas!" were echoed from side to side. Giacomo soon found he was the sole object of their merriment; on which Loisi, who had laid the whole scheme, saw that the time was come to execute his design of turning the tables upon the conjuror himself, and correcting him for many of his old faults. With this view, taking Giacomo aside after dinner, he acquainted him in a friendly way with everything that Angelo had done to make him ridiculous in their eyes. Giacomo, bearing in mind Loisi's words, set off with the most deadly intentions to find the hated necromancer. Without saying a word, he seized him by the hair of his head, and throwing him down, began to punish him with a degree of severity which it was extremely difficult for the conjuror to bear. Leaving him for some moments senseless upon the ground, our hero in his passion seized upon a huge stone near him, which would for ever have terminated the conjuror's career, had not his friends approached to deliver him out of the lover's hands.

Recovering him from his rage, and aware of all the follies of which he had been guilty, Giacomo, overcome with shame, retired to his own house, which he only left again to depart also from the city. Having disposed of his little property, he purchased for himself a steed and arms, and setting out for the seat of war, had the good fortune, aided by prudence and valour, to arrive at wealth and honour, esteemed by his comrades and commanders. For the whole of which he may be said to have been indebted to love and Messer Angelo; the latter of whom having received his just deserts at the hands of Giacomo, it only remains for us to admire the very mysterious and miraculous powers of the blind archer-boy, who, with a little assistance from Fortune, can confer so much happiness on those who enjoy his smiles.

NOVELLA XXXII.

THE following story was lately told by a Siennese gentleman to a party of lovely ladies, the relater being a character of no inconsiderable authority in the state. There was a young man of good family and accomplished manners, whose name was Mariotto Magnanelli, resident in Sienna, who had become deeply attached to a beautiful maiden, daughter of a very respectable citizen of the Saraceni family, belonging to the same place. After long and assiduous attentions, the youth had succeeded in gaining the young lady's affections, inspiring her with a passion scarcely less ardent than his own. But their eyes alone were permitted to avow the strength of those feelings which overwhelmed the hearts of both, seeking vainly and anxiously for some happy event which might unite them never more to part. As discreet

as beautiful, the young creature, disappointed in the consent of her friends, was prevailed on to yield her hand to him in secret, as the only means left of averting the broken-heartedness of separation and securing the enjoyment of their wishes. An Augustine friar united their hands, bound over to secrecy by the youth with no slight bribes Their ensuing days were too delicious long to last. Fortune became envious of their happiness; for Mariotto, in a quarrel with another noble citizen, which from words proceeded to blows, was unlucky enough to wound his adversary mortally, and, to save his own life, was compelled to secrete himself and to fly.

The court of Sienna, after instituting the strictest search, condemned the offender to perpetual banishment. The alarm, the grief, the tears of these young and inexperienced beings, thus rudely awakened out of their dream of life's sweetest joys, can be conceived only by those who, with similar feelings, have bade each other an eternal farewell, but cannot be described Long and bitter was their parting; entranced in sorrow, they lay sobbing in each other's arms, they struggled to part, but they caught each other's eyes, and again rushed back to embrace, when the fair bride bowed her head upon her lover's breast, and became lost even to her despair Their grief having exhausted itself, he flattered her with hopes of returning to his country and his love; that though he left Italy, he should find a home in Alexandria with his uncle, a wealthy and reputable merchant, whence he assured her he would write to her, and adopt such measures that they should not long remain divided, and thus, still shedding tears, they tore themselves away from each other. Immediately before he left his native shore, Mariotto took his brother aside, and acquainting him with the whole affair, earnestly recommended his forsaken bride to his care, entreating to hear of her from him as often as possible, with the minutest accounts of everything that might befall her; after which he went on board and the ship set sail Being received by his uncle with the most kind and joyous welcome, the exile soon made him acquainted with the history of his unhappy adventures. Listening with the utmost commiseration to the poor youth's story, the merchant, instead of vainly reproaching him for his past errors, with equal gentleness and prudence endeavoured to console and flatter him with hopes of future reconciliation with the families he had offended, though he did not pretend to disguise his fears on the delicacy of his situation, and the necessity for the strictest caution in his proceedings. He then intrusted to him some of his mercantile affairs, entertaining him in his own house, though not without much secret suffering on the part of the young man, and many bitter tears shed by him when alone, in spite of the letters he from time to time received from his deserted bride or from his brother, the only happiness he now possessed. In the meanwhile, however, the father of Giannozza had been frequently solicited to bestow his daughter's hand on various suitors for her love; and though numbers had been refused, such flattering proposals were at length made, that the poor girl had no longer any colour of excuse. In this wretched state of torture and suspense, death itself seemed to be far preferable to the life she endured; and

finding at last that there appeared no hope of her dear husband's return, and that to divulge the real truth would only be the ruin of both, a thought struck her, and she resolved, at every hazard both of life and reputation, however dreadful, to rescue herself from her impending fate. Inspired with a noble resolution, she signified her obedience to her father's pleasure. She then despatched a message for the monk who had been the cause of all their sorrow in first uniting their hands, and secretly revealing her intentions, she besought his assistance in promoting her fixed resolve. He listened to her with surprise, and, as is usual with his order, evinced some degree of timidity and indecision, nor was it until he had swallowed a cordial to restore his flagging spirits, and beheld the glittering bait, that he could be persuaded to enter into her views. When he had heard the extremity to which she was reduced, the friar, as time pressed, hastened in obedience to her orders to prepare a certain drug, the power of which, when mixed with water, was sufficient to produce a sleep deep and inanimate as death, which would continue during three days, and this he immediately despatched to the courageous and devoted wife. As soon as she had received it, she sat down and wrote to her husband a full account of her intentions with regard to the manner in which she thus fearfully proposed, with the aid of the friar, to rejoin him. Then joyfully seizing the cup, she drank off the whole, and shortly feeling a deep stupor stealing over her, she fell half unconsciously on her bed, as if she had breathed her last.

Her maidens coming into her chamber, with wild cries announced some fearful event, when her father, followed by some of his guests, burst into the room, and beheld his only and cherished child lifeless before his eyes. In vain were the physicians called in; after fruitless efforts to restore her, it was agreed by all that she had fallen a victim to a sudden spasmodic affection of the stomach. She remained the whole of that day and the ensuing night in the same state, without showing the least sign of life. The next, to the infinite grief of her parents and friends, no less than of numbers of the Siennese people, she was interred with the most splendid rites and ceremonies in a grand vault in the Church of St. Augustine. But about the hour of midnight she was removed from this living tomb by the venerable friar and one of his companions, and laid, according to the concerted plan, in his own chamber. The hour being come when the heavy drug was to lose its influence, she was with some difficulty restored by the trembling friar to life, and awakening as from a dream, in three days she was enabled to set out on her meditated journey to meet one for whom she had perilled so much. In the disguise of a monk she reached the port of Pisa, whence a convoy of ships was about to sail which touched at Alexandria, and here she embarked. But driven back by contrary winds and other casualties, the vessels were compelled to seek port and to refit, being in this manner detained many months at sea. Gargano, the brother of the youthful husband, had in the meanwhile written to him, according to his promise, a particular account of everything relating to his beloved wife, and from this source had the unfortunate Mariotto received the overwhelming tidings of her sudden

to him her sad story, was received with the utmost tenderness and compassion. But what was the anguish of her feelings, when, instead of embracing the beloved object for whose sake she had supported herself through such trying scenes, she learned that, receiving false accounts of her death, her husband had secretly left the place, and nothing had since been heard of him. She had borne toil and anguish, but every other grief had been light to this, this last of ills, which she could never have foreseen, and the shock of which it must be left to the feeling mind to imagine, since to express it is impossible

Restored once more to herself, she received the kindness lavished upon her with showers of tears, and consented, thus weeping abundantly, to be accompanied back by the good merchant, without loss of time, to Sienna; clinging to one desperate hope of being reunited to her lover, either living or in the grave. Resuming, then, once more the pilgrim's cowl and staff, this widowed and devoted bride again committed herself with the merchant to the dangerous seas, and now, alas! favouring breezes bore her onwards towards the Tuscan shores. They landed at Piombino, and thence hastened to a villa belonging to Ser Niccolo, the merchant, not far from Sienna. The first answer they received to their hasty inquiries was, that Mariotto had suffered the sentence of the law only three days before their arrival. However much they had feared, still they were far from being prepared to meet such a confirmation of the calamity, and they were both too greatly afflicted any longer to console each other The deep and incessant sobs of the unhappy lady would have melted the sternest heart; but it at length became necessary to resolve upon some step, and after affording her every consolation in his power, the kind-hearted merchant, with the advice of his friends and the consent of the unhappy widow, removed her into a neighbouring monastery, where all the tenderness and attentions which her birth and station required were richly supplied. But never did she again look up amidst her sorrow: there she continued to weep over her loss and the misfortunes she had endured; and receiving the consolation and caresses of the abbess, who had been informed of her sad story, in silent grief she daily faded away, and often calling piteously upon her dear husband's name, she not long afterwards expired.

NOVELLA XLIV.

I PROCEED to make you acquainted with an incident which occurred during the late campaign in Romagna, at a time when both parties were compelled to abandon military operations, and retire into winter quarters, owing to the severity of the season. One of the celebrated commanders, Alfonso, Duke of Calabria, found it requisite to occupy the Pisanese territories, whither he led his fine Arragonese army, and cantoned it among the towns and castles in the vicinity. According to the rules of war, as well as to further the interests of the League, he then proceeded to a personal inspection of several of the noblest

cities and fortifications of Italy. Being everywhere received with marks of triumph and distinction, it happened that, in passing through one of these cities, he was so much pleased with its appearance and the acclamations of the inhabitants, that he resolved to sojourn there for some time. In the tournaments and festivals which distinguished this period, one of the Duke's favourite friends, of high birth and rare endowments, whose name was Marino Caracciuolo, bore no insignificant share. Gallantly riding at the head of his companions through the city, he chanced, among the beautiful faces that looked forth that day, to cast his eyes on one whose youthful charms captivated his attention far beyond all the others. As he passed on, her ideas still occupied his fancy, insomuch that he scarcely knew which road to take in order to find his way back. Frequently repairing, however, to the same spot, he so earnestly watched and followed her, that he attracted her attention, and at length prevailed upon her to return his favourable regards

Marino was overjoyed when he discovered that she began to reward his passion. Resolved to avail himself of every occasion to promote his suit, among other means he announced a grand ball to be given in honour of his distinguished chief. Nearly all the ladies of the place were invited, and among these he had the delight of beholding the fascinating maiden, in honour of whose attractions the entertainment was really given. Nor was the Duke himself less struck with her; and, quite unconscious of his friend's attachment, he soon became so far enslaved by the surpassing beauty of her person and her manners, as to resolve upon obtaining her love at any price. The young lady, who had never before beheld him, though she had more than once heard him highly commended for all the best and noblest qualities befitting a prince, was surprised to find that in magnanimity, courtesy, and heroic beauty, the reality so far outstripped the good report. She gazed upon him as the model of grace and noble manners; and mingled with the highest admiration, she offered up vows in her secret heart for his happiness and good fortune. Nor was it long before the prince perceived the impression he had made, and employed the evening so well, that before he took leave of her they became perfectly aware of the feelings which they mutually entertained. After particular inquiries into her rank and character, these feelings soon ripened on both sides into the warmest passion, and being introduced into her society by means of the richest bribes and presents, the prince proceeded in his designs, scarcely doubting of ultimate success. In the meanwhile, the lady not only discountenanced Marino's visits, but everywhere treated him with the utmost indifference and scorn, which, contrasted with her previous kindness, threw the unfortunate lover into such a fit of jealousy and despair, that, giving loose to his passion, he abandoned his military duties and refused the society of his friends Struck with this sudden change, the Duke frequently questioned him as to its cause, but could obtain no satisfactory answer, until imagining that he had now the object of his pursuit in his power, he, as usual on such occasions, ordered his friend Marino into his presence, observing, "Though I find you are still unwilling to acquaint

me with the real cause of your unhappiness, I shall nevertheless continue, as before, to confide to you every secret of my breast; as a proof of which, learn that I am at this time engaged, within a few hours, to a beautiful young lady whom I trust I may then call my own. I entreat you, therefore, no less from affection than from duty, to wear a less lugubrious face, and either inform me what is the matter with you, or show a little more of your former cheerfulness. I shall not half enjoy my triumph if you do not accompany me, so come, my friend, and protect me in this perilous enterprise, on which I should be unwilling to enter without your assistance."

Quite overpowered with these words, Marino, regretting that he had so long and so ungratefully concealed his passion from his best friend and master, related the whole affair, not without great emotion pronouncing the lady's name. The Duke listened to him with equal surprise and pain, considering within himself the strength of his friend's attachment, who stood before him overpowered with remorse and grief. Then, consulting his own duties and his dignity, and conceiving that his more exalted station demanded the exertion of a superior degree of generosity, he determined without the least hesitation to prefer a lover's happiness to his own unbridled will.

"I doubt not you will do me the justice to believe, my dear Marino," said the Duke, "that I never took so much real pleasure in anything as in sharing my fortune with my friends. At least you shall now be convinced of it; for though I declare to you that I am passionately attached to this very lady, whom this evening I had prevailed upon to receive me to her arms, I shall not swerve from the line of conduct I have hitherto observed. I withdraw my claim, however much I may feel, for I cannot behold your affliction; so cheer up, my dear friend, and prepare to come along with me. Nay, no resistance, for I am resolved that before long you shall call our beloved girl your own. I have been much to blame, but you must forgive me, Marino, since I did not know that you loved her first. She is virtuous; we have only to get a priest, and she shall make you happy." On hearing this generous offer, Marino expressed the utmost gratitude, declaring at the same time that he had rather die than think of interfering with any engagements which his Highness had thought it advisable to make. "No apologies are necessary," replied the Duke, smiling; "and as I have said it, so it shall be;" and taking his friend's arm, the Duke led him to the lady's house. Leaving a few of their followers, for further security, near, they were introduced into the presence of the woman they loved, who received the Duke, advancing first, with unfeigned delight. Although she recognised her former admirer, she bestowed no further notice upon him than if he had been a stranger accompanying his master to receive his orders. But the noble Duke introducing him to her with a smile, and taking her hand in the most affectionate manner, thus addressed her. "I entreat you, my dear lady, by the true love I bear you, not to be offended with what I am about to say, because I would only have you so far listen to my request as it is honest and of good report. Nor can you give me a stronger proof of your high regard for me than by acceding to it. In

my last interview with my royal father, before setting out on the present campaign, among other wise precepts, he most particularly insisted on the necessity of prudence in regard to my allowing myself to be surprised or taken captive in the ambush of a lady's eyes, citing many famous examples, besides that of the bold King Lancilao, of the bad effects of worshipping so tyrannical a deity as Love. And though I am inexpressibly grateful, and passionately attached to you, yet when I consider the late advice and injunctions of the king, the sorrow my love would entail upon you, and the sufferings of this my faithful friend and servant, whom nearest of all my followers I regard, it becomes my duty to inform you that he is deeply and desperately in love with you, and every way most deserving of your hand. But we are both yours: it is for you to decide; deal with us as you please;" and drawing his breath after this painful effort, the prince remained silent.

Great indeed was the surprise and shock to the feelings of the lady, but being discreet and virtuous, although in this instance she had been somewhat carried away, she resolved to emulate the generosity of the noble Duke, and making a virtue of necessity, and stifling her feelings, with a serene and cheerful countenance she thus replied: "I shall not venture, my lord, to insist, as my excuse, upon the many noble and amiable qualities which, I confess with tears of shame, have brought me into this condition; yet indeed you may believe me when I say that ambition was not my motive. I knew the distinction, the impassable barrier between us; but I saw you loved me; you addressed me, you followed me; and I could not help loving you again. But as it is your wish—and I cannot but the more admire you for it, who, being the son of a powerful monarch, and graced with beauty, power, and glory, resign voluntarily your wishes to another—I am ready to yield to your entreaties, my lord (I had rather you would call them commands), in behalf of the friend whom you so much love. And if he can forgive me, if studying his will and happiness can at all atone for my past weakness" (her sweet face was covered with tears and blushes), "here, my lord, is my hand;" and he placed it in that of his friend Marino.

NOVELLA XLV.[1]

ATTRACTED by the very distinguished and ancient reputation enjoyed by the University of Bologna, an eminent scholar of Castile resolved to visit that city for the purpose of obtaining the legal degrees. The young man's name was Messer Alfonso da Toleto, esteemed for his virtues, and in very easy circumstances, the recent death of his father, a noble cavalier, having left it in his power to furnish himself with everything requisite for his studies. Thus, with handsome equipments, steeds, domestics, an excellent library, and a thousand gold florins in

[1] Some of the incidents of this story appear to have been suggested by those contained in the second of the first day of the "Pecorone" of Ser Giovanni, *ante*, p. 115.

his purse, he set out upon his way to Italy. Passing in a few days, by way of Castile and Catalonia, into France, he arrived at Avignon, where he proposed for a short time to remain.

The next day, as he was proceeding from his inn to amuse himself with observing the place, he chanced to behold, looking from a balcony, a very beautiful lady, whose equal he imagined he had never before seen; and as he passed along her attractions were still present to his view. Such, indeed, was the impression, that abandoning all his laudable pursuits, he determined to remain in that place until he obtained some portion of her regard. By frequently passing her house and throwing himself on all occasions in her way, he so far betrayed his attachment, that, being a very artful creature, she quickly perceived that she had him in her power. Aware of his youth and inexperience, as well as of his wealth and quality, she began to consider how she might best impose upon him for her own interested purposes. And in order to engage more speedily in a conference, like some piratical vessel sending out its boats to seize provisions for its voyage, she fixed upon a wicked old creature, well trained to the business, and seating herself in the window, prepared to observe the result. This it was that the poor youth most ardently desired. Before the old hag broke off the interview, she had learned everything from him she wished; and after various presents and messages had passed on both sides, it was agreed that he should be permitted to wait upon the lady the following evening, on the condition of bringing with him a thousand gold florins as the price of the lady's conquest. When the hour arrived, this imprudent and unfortunate young man was conducted to her dwelling, and received with apparent pleasure by its inmate, whose name was Laura, and there, unhappily for them both, he remained with her until the following day. And having arranged how they should in future meet without fear of exciting the suspicions of her relations, the wretched youth reluctantly took his leave, and returned to his own abode.

The lady seized upon her spoils with triumph, and before her lover left her, so imposed upon his credulity by her arts, that, having dismissed all idea of Bologna and its studies from his mind, he expected to have frequent access to her society. So the following evening, not in the least doubting of the same favourable reception, he hastened at the same hour to the lady's residence, and having repeated the signal of his arrival without effect, he was at length compelled, however unwillingly, to retire with the loss, no less of his wealth and honour, than of his beloved object, and, stung with rage and grief, slumber refused to visit his eyes during the whole of that unhappy night. Resolved the next morning to ascertain this cruel treachery, he again visited the fatal house, where he found both doors and windows closed, in confirmation of all his worst fears that he had been vilely abandoned and betrayed by the artful woman to whom he was so passionately attached. He returned to his friends and followers full of desperate thoughts against himself, which stifling with the utmost difficulty, he prepared to leave the place. And being quite destitute of means to discharge his expenses, he was compelled to dispose of one of his finest mules.

Having thus satisfied his host, with the trifling resources which yet remained he proceeded on his way through Provence towards Italy, plunged in the deepest grief at the thoughts of having to travel to Bologna, and to reside there as a poor student, instead of making the noble figure he had expected. As he went thus full of grievous thoughts along his weary way, being arrived at Trayques, he had the singular fortune to take up his residence at the same inn where the husband of the artful Laura had just entered for the night. He was a handsome and accomplished cavalier, of distinguished eloquence and great authority in the state, and was then returning from an embassy sent by the king of France to the Pope. Having begged the host to inform him should any noble traveller alight, in order to enjoy his society at table, a custom always observed by travellers from France, he was told that there was a Spanish scholar going to Bologna, who, according to the account of his domestics, appeared buried in the profoundest sorrow, having scarcely broken fast for the last two days. On hearing this, the cavalier very good-naturedly determined to invite the poor youth to sup with him, and, becoming his own messenger, he introduced himself into his room, where he found him seated in a disconsolate attitude, and taking him affectionately by the hand, entreated he would favour him with his company to supper. The youth perceiving from his appearance that he was a person of some importance, could not refuse, thus invited, to accompany him; and sitting down together, when they had concluded their meal, they dismissed their domestics from the room. The ambassador then ventured to inquire into the object of the young man's travels, and next, as far as delicacy allowed, into the cause of his apparent affliction. Messer Alfonso, in great emotion, replied with difficulty to his first question, entreating to be excused from touching upon the latter. But his new friend, having learned the reason of his leaving home, and the high respectability of his family, became still more solicitous to discover the origin of the excessive melancholy which seemed to overpower him. After frequently evading his questions, the youth was at length persuaded by the deep interest he evinced in his welfare to confide to him the whole of his unhappy adventure, with the lady's name, and the manner in which he had been entertained by her; adding that the disappointment he felt at being thus betrayed, and the loss of all his resources, had driven him to the verge of despair. The cavalier, who had thus unconsciously insisted upon the knowledge of his own dishonour, at these words soon presented a far more distressing picture of wretchedness than even the author of his disgrace; and it is for high-minded men alone, who may have survived the loss of honour, to appreciate the real nature of his feelings. But with his usual prudence and self-command, he checked the impulse of his feelings, adopting with singular promptness the line of conduct which he conceived such an emergency required Then turning towards the youth, he thus addressed him: "You have indeed, young man, given loose to your passions in a very reprehensible manner, and fallen into the snares of a vile wretch, whom, from your own statements, you should have avoided with the utmost care,

Could my severest reproaches now avail you, I should never cease to condemn your folly; but as you are in far greater want of assistance than of blame, it will be enough to leave you to the remorse such conduct cannot fail to produce. Cease, however, to entertain the desperate thoughts you have already too much indulged, and you shall find that in the end I will become your real friend, and treat you no otherwise than if you were my own son. And, as you may perceive, I am a foreigner, bound to pursue my route, excuse me if I cannot be at your disposal, and do not object to accompany me back the way you came. Come to my house for a few days, and I then promise you that you shall pursue your first intentions with far more pleasure than you at present believe. For the reputation of your family and your father's noble character will not permit me to behold his son proceeding thus unhappily to commence his studies, unable to support the respectability of his name and the virtues to which it has ever been allied." Surprised at these proofs of kindness, the youth expressed his gratitude, as far as mingled grief and shame permitted him to give utterance to his feelings They then separated for the night, and the next day set out on their way towards France, travelling so speedily under the direction of the cavalier, that they arrived, ere nightfall, in the city of Avignon. The cavalier then taking the young man's arm, immediately conducted him to his own house, the fatal house whither he had before resorted, and recognising the spot, he beheld the same lady advancing with lights in her hands to welcome her husband home. Aware of the whole truth, he immediately gave himself up for lost; and being scarcely able to alight from his horse, the cavalier assisted him, and led him trembling into the same apartment, the scene of his guilty pleasures, and now of his bitter and inexpressible remorse. The wife, starting back at the sight of the student, stood as if conscious of her impending fate; and it would be impossible to describe the grief and terror at that moment depicted on her countenance. The supper made its appearance, when they sat down, together with the lady, all in their secret thoughts indulging varied feelings of pain. The supper-table being withdrawn, the cavalier turning towards his wife, thus addressed her: "Laura, bring me the thousand gold florins which this young person gave you, and for which you bartered, together with your person, your own honour and mine, and that of all our family."

On hearing these words, the lady appeared as if she were sinking into the earth, and was unable to utter the least answer. Her husband then fixing his eye upon her with a stern expression, and seizing his dagger, exclaimed, "Thou vilest of women, as you value your life, this moment do as I have commanded you!" Marking his rising passion, his wife, overpowered with fear and weeping bitterly, dared not even deny the fact, and going out, immediately returned with the money, which she laid with a trembling hand upon the table. Having examined it, her husband took one of the pieces, and presented it to the young man, who stood speechless with fear, momentarily expecting, together with the lady, to feel the fatal dagger at his heart. As he presented the coin, the cavalier thus continued. "Every one ought

to be rewarded for his pains; and as this lady was at the trouble of entertaining you both with love and scorn, and may deservedly be ranked with the vilest of her sex, who do not deserve to receive more than one ducat at once, I beg that you, sir, who hired her, will please to pay her what I have given you." And compelling his wife to receive it, it was so done. Then perceiving the young man to be quite oppressed with fear and shame, his eyes fixed upon the earth and his voice convulsed with sobs, he continued: "Take your ill-guarded and ill-spent gold, poor youth, and remember for the future to employ it better than in purchasing your shame, instead of acquiring the reputation and honour which your family has a right to expect. Aim at nobler pursuits, signor! But I would not willingly distress you; you require rest, and you may sleep under my roof secure. I give you my hand, as a man of honour: leave us; good night!"

The unhappy youth was then shown into a richly furnished apartment, with every attendance and convenience; but his thoughts were of too wild a nature to admit of repose. Often did they wander back to the last looks of the associate of his guilty pleasures; often did he start up in terror as if he had heard her voice: he was indeed safe; but the light of morning never again broke upon that lady's eyes.

The following day, the cavalier, having prepared for their departure, accompanied the youth about ten miles beyond the city, and on taking leave, presented him with various rich presents, saying, "Although I have granted you your life, no less than the fortune you had lost, I cannot feel easy in parting with you unless you consent to receive from my hands these trifling gifts, together with this horse, as a recompense for the sale of your mule. In token of my pity for you, and in consideration of the sufferings you have incurred, deign to accept them, and henceforward consider me in the light of a father, as I shall continue to feel the same interest in you as if you were really my son." And then tenderly embracing the poor youth, whose continued sobs and tears choked his utterance, he took a sorrowful leave of him, imposing only perpetual silence as to the events which had just taken place. Unable to thank him, the youth pursued his way to Bologna, while the cavalier returned to the city of Avignon. But never having been made acquainted with the after fortunes of either party, I refrain from adding anything further on the subject.

NOVELLA XLVI.

THE memorable enterprises and numerous victories of the Christian princes of Portugal in the regions of the East are celebrated throughout the world. How frequently have their proud fleets crossed the seas, bearing their veteran armies to the field of conquest upon Moorish ground! And as no monarchs have surpassed them in their chivalric ardour to spread the banners of the faith, so their prowess is in no want of such commendation as mine to go down with honour to posterity. But passing over their ancient conquests, I propose to

treat of the history of the invincible monarch, Don Alfonso, who, occupying the powerful city of Agalser Segher, and other strong places, which had been conquered by the king his father in the kingdom of Fez, prepared to reduce the great city of Arzil. But when he had just brought it to terms of capitulation, he was informed that the king of Fez had despatched one of his own relations, a prudent and valiant captain, idolised by the Moors, at the head of a noble army, to the succour of the besieged. On the approach of Mole Fez, Don Alfonso, unwilling to await his attack, broke up his entrenchments, and having arrayed his forces, marched forth to meet him, leaving only a sufficient number to carry on the siege. About sunrise on the second morning these two great armies came in sight of each other, and instantly preparing for action, a long-contested and very sanguinary battle ensued, which at length terminated in the rout of the Moors. Their loss was enormous, and their commander, scorning to desert the field, was taken prisoner, fighting to the last and covered with wounds. Such a capture was esteemed by his adversary no less glorious than the victory itself, as he was in hopes that the Moors, deprived of their greatest captain, would no longer be in a condition to resist him. For this reason, after the fall of the city of Arzil he resolved to detain Mole Fez in an easy and honourable captivity for life. Tidings of this fatal engagement having reached the king of Fez, in the utmost haste and terror he despatched an embassy to Don Alfonso, entreating him, that if he were so uncourteous as to refuse to deliver up his noble prisoner, he would at least fix the price of his ransom, presenting to the king at the same time many rich gifts as an earnest of his worth. The king, however, in very few words, replied, that having deliberated on the matter, he had fully resolved never to yield him up, and that any proposals, of whatever nature, would be made in vain, as he should not even receive them.

On obtaining this final reply, the mother of the Moorish chief, though she despaired of beholding, much less of rescuing, her only and dear-loved son, nevertheless resolved to omit no means which wealth or ingenuity could supply to restore him to freedom and to his friends After long deliberation, relying on her own resources, she determined to summon her train of ladies and other followers; and having made every preparation, she set out for the Christian camp The cavalcade arriving at the royal tent, the courtiers, not a little surprised, proceeded to inform the king, who gave orders to receive the princess with all due honour and respect. When, after some discussion, she was admitted to an audience with the king, she addressed him at once in a noble and gentle strain, and to the following effect: "I doubt not, most noble prince, you are surprised that I should venture in this sudden and confident manner to appear before you; but if your majesty will deign to hear the reasons which have moved me to this strange step, I trust I shall rather awaken your compassion than your surprise. A prince, upon whom Heaven has bestowed your majesty's reputed wisdom, cannot fail to have observed the extent of a mother's wretchedness, of her unutterable woe, when suddenly deprived of her offspring; but, alas! how much more when

she loses the only child she possessed in the world. Such an afflicted and unhappy mother am I, with no hope of comfort, save in the fame of your majesty's generosity and clemency, which have inspired me with confidence, and thus brought me a suppliant at your feet. And, as I doubt not such fame has justly informed me that faith and honour are the objects for which you combat, and virtue the law which you observe, by these I conjure you, most noble prince, to listen to a mother's woes, and restore to her, in your mercy, her only and darling son. I feel too well that no ransom can be offered equal to a mother's delight in clasping her lost one to her bosom. wherefore, my dear lord, I have only brought you, with a woman's feeble power and heart, the whole of my slight possessions, if you will deign to receive them, and bestow them in the entertainment of your chivalric followers You will thus no less restore my son than myself to life and freedom, and we shall ever hold ourselves, as far as our sacred laws permit, at the service and disposal of our liberator."

Struck with the singular prudence and sagacity displayed in the conduct of the Moorish princess, although his followers advised him to seize her as his prisoner, the king, consulting the honour and dignity of his station, resolved to sacrifice them to no views of interest, and with cheerful looks replied as follows: "The noble confidence you have reposed in me, gentle lady, in thus appearing before me, together with the sorrowful motives of your arrival, have so far conquered my reluctance to listen to your proposals for the liberation of your noble son, that I now freely restore him to your arms, on the condition of his aiding me in my present enterprise; or, if he should be unable to accept these terms, that he will no longer advance to combat against my banners."

The princess expressed her gratitude in the most eloquent terms; at the same time adding that she would not deceive so kind and generous a prince by pretending to engage for the performance of actions which rested in the power of another; but that his majesty might be assured that both she herself and everything she called her own would henceforth be wholly at his command, and that she trusted, moreover, so to influence her beloved son that the conditions should be inviolably preserved, even unto death. This high-minded reply was extremely pleasing to the liberal feelings of the king. Esteeming her more highly than before, he commanded the Moorish chief to be introduced, and after witnessing the mutual and unbounded raptures of the mother and the son, turning towards the latter, he explained the conditions on which, as his friend and ally, he might become free Unmoved at these words, Mole Fez immediately replied, "It would be idle to give thanks, most excellent prince, for offers for which no gratitude, no services, can yield adequate return. But as I hold myself more bound to the laws of my country than to any existing circumstances, or to any terms that can be imposed, so I might be again called upon to fight the battles of that country, a call which I could not resist, whatever new obligations stood in my way. Heaven forbid it, then, that I should accept terms it might not be in my power to observe. I should still esteem myself a prisoner,

a captive in soul though free; and were I to serve you, both present and future times would say I had been your slave. In the name, then, of that nobility which you may justly boast, I entreat you either to let me go free as the airs of heaven, or to plunge me again into captivity to terminate my days in solitude."

Recognising in the chieftain's words the same loftiness and truth of character which distinguished his parent, and fired by their noble example, the victorious monarch exerted his generosity to the utmost, and advancing from his seat, exclaimed, "No, neither of you are my prisoners—you are free: with the whole of your treasures, without a single promise, you are free. Return with your excellent son; for you are deserving of it, lady: you know how to appreciate the liberality of kings. You threw yourself and your fortunes at my feet, and you shall never find such confidence in my virtue misplaced; to abuse it would be to fix a stain upon my crown and upon my memory. It remains with yourselves to be at peace or war with me, for I trust in my own good sword, without the aid of Mole Fez, to achieve the enterprise I have in view." The monarch then dismissed them, full of gratitude, with many valuable proofs of his kindness, and they hastened joyfully to meet their friends, who expressed the utmost astonishment on beholding them. The courts and the public places were everywhere thronged to catch a sight of the mother and the son as they passed along; and the Moorish king, the princess, and the whole people, never ceased to extol the magnanimous virtues and chivalry of the Christian prince, Don Alfonso. But Mole Fez and the lady did not stop here; for, in the ensuing season, raising a powerful army, they passed over to assist the Portuguese monarch in his approaching campaigns. Great was his surprise and pleasure at their arrival, and receiving his noble allies with marks of the highest respect and favour, he ever afterwards esteemed Mole Fez in the light of his own brother. Seldom, indeed, were they seen apart; in battle they fought at each other's side, and in peace they were friends and companions; and such was the gratitude and loyalty of Mole Fez, that he devoted himself to the interests of the Christian monarch serving him with fidelity as long as he lived.

NOVELLA L.

THE last in my collection of those noble and virtuous actions which I have always been desirous of commemorating is one related to me by a distinguished foreigner, which, as being strictly true, it is with equal pride and pleasure I proceed to detail. There resided some time ago in the famous city of Toledo a cavalier named Messer Piero Lopez d'Aiala, of high and ancient lineage, whose only son, a fine and spirited youth of the name of Aries, had the misfortune to engage in a nocturnal brawl Both parties, in one of which was the king's particular favourite, drawing their swords, Messer Aries, engaging with the latter, passed his weapon through his body on the spot. On dis-

covering the rank of his adversary, aware of the royal favour enjoyed by him, and dreading the indignation of his monarch, the youth resolved to take to flight, and being furnished by his father with horses and attendants, he set out to try his fortunes in another land. And hearing of the sanguinary war then waging between the English and the French in the territories of the latter, he resorted without delay to the scene of action, burning with the hope of signalising himself during the campaign. Arriving in the French army, he had the good fortune to alight at the quarters of the Count d'Armagnac, captain-general of the king's forces, and related to the royal house of France. With his permission, the young Castilian employed the remains of his small resources in equipping himself for battle, in which he so greatly signalised himself, both by his courage and his conduct, as well in open field as in the siege, that he became at once admired and celebrated by his own party and dreaded by his adversaries. In the course of time he rose so high in the esteem of his commander, no less than of the French monarch, that he was intrusted and honoured above any other favourites of the court, being in a little while promoted to the rank of campo-major, and acquitting himself in such a manner that he was consulted in almost every action. The campaign being concluded with great honour and advantage on the part of the French, with the aid of the young and enterprising Castilian, both armies were compelled by the severity of the season to retire into winter quarters, and, with the chief part of the general officers and cavaliers, our noble adventurer sought the gaieties of Paris

In order to celebrate his successes in the most popular way, the king sent an invitation to all his chief lords and barons to be present with their ladies at an appointed festival, along with their followers and companions-in-arms. First in the train of favourite nobles, magnificently arrayed in the honours he had won, appeared the Count d'Armagnac, accompanied by his lovely and only daughter, whose charms attracted every eye. The joyous and splendid feast began, and was celebrated throughout many happy days with all the pleasures which love, and mirth, and music could afford; and still the star whose brightness eclipsed the beauties of the rest was the eye of the Count's fair daughter. And as if to show that her taste was in no way inferior to her beauty and accomplishments, having glanced her eye through the ranks of youth and chivalry marshalled around her, it ever returned and rested on the fine features of the Spanish cavalier, the music of whose fame and virtues had already sounded sweet in her ears. Too incautiously dwelling on these, the loved idea took her fancy captive, until she at last became so deeply interested in him, that whenever she passed the day without seeing or conversing with him she felt her existence a burden to her. Possessing no one in whom she could confide, in spite of all her struggles, her feelings, when in his presence, half betrayed the secret which preyed upon her heart: her eyes, her voice, and her very motions, when in his presence, or addressing him, all expressed far deeper and softer emotions than language dared to reveal. Nor was the object of them either so cold or so inexperienced as not to be sensible of the impression he had

made. But although he thought her the most beautiful woman he had ever seen, the numerous favours he had received from the Count, her father, were so great as to banish every idea of his own gratification in attaching her affections to himself. With this virtuous resolve, he affected to misunderstand the nature of her impassioned feelings, assuming an apparent calmness in his manners, and a coldness, which struck a pang to the unhappy lady's heart. Unable longer to contend with the variety of emotions which shook her bosom and hourly preyed upon her life, she resolved, with the impulse of despair, to upbraid him for his cruelty, to unfold her love, and to die. And, half effaced with blinding tears, she committed her unhappy secret to paper, filled with the very soul of wretched passion, an appeal which no heart of marble, much less that of a fond lover, could have withstood. The conclusion was, that she had resolved to die rather than to survive the weakness of betraying her unhappy love. The young page to whom she confided the letter, conceiving from her manner that it contained something of high importance, and fearful of the result, bore it immediately to the Count, his master. It is impossible to express her father's surprise and grief on learning the extravagance and folly of which this, his only daughter, had been guilty; but every noble spirit, shunning infamy and disgrace beyond death itself, may form some idea of his sensations. In this afflicting circumstance he adopted and rejected a thousand various plans of punishing his unworthy child; but as he felt that it ought to be something proportionate to the intolerable pain which she had thus inflicted upon him, he first determined to try the worth and firmness of the young Castilian, and took his measures accordingly. Having carefully wrapped and sealed the letter, he returned it to the boy with orders to deliver it to Messer Aries, and having waited for a reply, to bring it immediately back to him. These orders being promptly complied with, the young cavalier received it with a throb of ecstasy as he caught the name of his beloved; yet having already prepared his mind by strict discipline and self-control, he persevered in braving the fascinating danger. Armed strong in rectitude, he replied with all the delicacy and honour of a true knight to the lady's letter, beseeching her in conclusion rather to inflict any kind of punishment upon him, even unto death, than tempt him either in thought or word to presume on what might offend the honour and dignity of the Count, her father. Dreading, nevertheless, to hurt the feelings of her he loved, and aware of the fatal consequences of scorned or disappointed affections in a woman's soul, he implied the high honour and gratification he should have experienced in indulging such lofty hopes. "Would you venture," he continued, "to throw yourself upon your father's confidence, revealing to him every feeling of your breast (fully sensible as I am of the inequality of our lot), and were it possible that he should smile upon our loves, then, only then, might we pronounce ourselves blest; but otherwise forget me—hate me; for when I dwell on the obligations I owe to your father, neither beauty nor ambition, nor any charms or treasures upon earth, shall lead me to sully, in any manner or degree, the brightness of his name."

Having despatched his answer by the same discreet little messenger, he awaited in much fear and anxiety the result of the strange circumstances in which he was so deeply engaged. The page instantly ran to his master with the above reply, whose previous sorrow and indignation were much diminished on perusing the noble sentiments entertained by the cavalier, and such was his admiration and regard, that he even became gentle and loving as before to his beautiful but weak and unhappy girl. Under these feelings, without saying a word to his daughter, he hastened into the presence of his sovereign, to whom in no slight agitation he recounted the whole of the affair; and after unfolding his own feelings and sentiments on the subject, he entreated that the king would graciously deign to offer his advice. Gifted with great natural sagacity and prudence, the monarch expressed himself by no means surprised at the weak conduct shown by the young lady, being nothing, he declared, very strange or unusual; but he could scarcely prevail upon himself to believe the extraordinary resolution and constancy displayed by the cavalier. However high he had estimated his worth, he had never imagined him capable of such true greatness of soul, in thus sacrificing both ambition and love at the shrine of duty and fidelity.

The king then advised, or rather commanded, him to adopt the most generous resolution in his power; and sending forthwith for the noble Castilian, he closed the door on his attendants, and seizing him affectionately by the hand, he exclaimed, "I have long been sensible, Aires, of your high worth, evinced in all your actions, since you first joined my armies under the patronage of the Count. There has been nothing wanting to complete the excellence of your character, save an occasion to display the hidden force and rectitude of your principles, in the trial of which you have acquitted yourself so nobly, so honourably, and respected the persons whom you loved. I am rejoiced to think that your virtues in peace are equal to the courage and skill you so well displayed in war. We are truly indebted to you, and must endeavour to find such a reward as you may like, such as may evince our gratitude for your good deeds, and hand down your virtue to other times. I have heard the whole of your generous conduct from the lips of the Count, and if nobility of mind and the best qualities of the heart may entitle you to the lady's love, you not only deserve her, but the very highest and richest princess in the state. But she is beautiful, she loves you, and you are at liberty, when you so please, to take her for your wife." The Count then likewise came forward, and confirming everything the king had said, tenderly embraced the cavalier, considering himself honoured in possessing such a son-in-law.

Equally surprised and rejoiced at the unexpected turn of affairs in his favour, the Castilian, with singular modesty, replied, "Although I am aware that the high authority of your majesty and the noble qualities of the Count are sufficient to exalt me to any degree of rank, I am, at the same time, too sensible of the inequality of my own birth and fortunes to venture upon such a step as you have generously proposed. Permit me to be near your majesty, and to serve you to the utmost of my ability, as I have hitherto done; but let your majesty

and the Count both take it again into consideration how far the subject of your favour may be worthy of so high an honour." But the generous monarch persisted in his intentions, and in order to bring the affair to a speedy and happy termination, he commanded that a sumptuous festival should be held the ensuing day in his palace, which took place in the most gay and magnificent style. Proud trains of lords and cavaliers and gay bevies of ladies, with music, dance, and song, gave life and spirit to the scene. In the midst of these proceedings, the fair daughter of the Count, who had remained ignorant of all the previous explanations, was led forward, arrayed in her bridal ornaments; at the same moment, Messer Aries, the Castilian cavalier, was proclaimed by the heralds without to the applauding people captain-general of the king's armies, and immediately afterwards the monarch presented the young bride at the altar, where the noble cavalier received her hand.

The most rapturous surprise and joy beamed in the eyes of the lovers and the guests as this novel and happy ceremony was announced through the assembly. The feast and the dance revived with double spirit. Congratulations, commendations, and inquiries poured in on all sides upon the happy parties, until their union became the favourite topic no less of the court than of the people. Murmurs of applause ran through the rooms as the cavalier led forth his beautiful and happy bride to reap, at her father's castle, the fruits of his virtue and his valour.

Novels of Sabadino degli Arienti.

SABADINO DEGLI ARIENTI.[1]

In the chronological series which it is proposed to observe, the author who next follows Massuccio is Sabadino degli Arienti, a native of Bologna, and a person of some distinction in the district in which he was born. In addition to his claims as a novelist, he is known to have been an accomplished scholar and historian, his account of his native city being esteemed an extremely valuable work by his countrymen. He inscribed his volume of tales to Ercole, Duke of Ferrara, entitling them "Porretane," from the feigned circumstance of their having been recited at the baths of Porretta (whither the principal inhabitants of Bologna were accustomed during the summer season to resort as a place of public amusement), for the purpose, as the author himself informs us, of entertaining the ladies and gentlemen who attended. Whether really written with this view or not, the period of their composition corresponds very nearly with that of their publication, the first edition, containing seventy-one novels, appearing at Bologna in the year 1483. The greater part of these consists of amusing adventures and witty remarks, though they are occasionally interspersed with incidents of a more sombre cast.

There is no mention in contemporary writers of any particulars relating to the life and character of this novelist, but from some of his own productions alluded to by Ghirardacci and by Orlandi, it would appear that, far from having been of obscure descent, he lived on intimate terms with the family of Bentivoglio, one of the first in the country, to a member of which, Annibale Bentivoglio, he dedicated one of his publications, with expressions of familiar friendship. And if we may judge from some account contained in the twenty-seventh of his novels, some branches of his family ranked among the first merchants of Ferrara, whose liberality, integrity, and loyalty, rendered them an ornament to the city. He was well versed in the antiquities of his native place, and intimate with a gentleman of Verona, called Feliciano, attached to the same pursuits; of whom, on the authority of our novelist, there is a particular account in the Marchese Maffei's history of that place. He enjoyed, too, the society and correspondence of the celebrated Guarino of Carbone, and of Cornazzano and other illustrious poets and orators of the age.

Besides his novels, Arienti wrote an account of "Illustrious Ladies," "Delle Donne Clare," dedicated to Guinipera Sforza Bentivoglio, still

[1] Le Porretane, dove si tratta di settantuna novelle, con moralissimi documenti e dichiarazioni dell' anima, &c. Bologna, 1483, folio.

preserved in the public archives of Bologna. From the date of its composition in 1484, the period in which this novelist flourished very clearly appears. The exact time, likewise, in which he composed his "Porretane" is evident from his expressions in what he terms the Licenza of his work, where he says, that having sought refuge in Camurata from the pestilence which occurred in 1478,[1] and desolated his own district, he devoted himself with infinite pleasure to the invention of these tales. Many of Sabadino's stories are by no means destitute of intrinsic merit, but they cannot boast of the ornament of a pure and graceful style His composition, too, much resembles, in its loose and inverted construction, that of Massuccio ; the sole distinction being that the peculiarities and even barbarisms of his language are of Bolognese instead of Neapolitan extraction. Independent of this, the chief portion of those stories which are founded upon the historical events of his own times is of very inferior merit, with no sort of interest attaching to their details. The earliest edition of the "Porretane," in folio, 1483, has been since followed by four or five others, nearly at the same period of time, though at different places, and none later than the middle of the sixteenth century.

A few of the "Porretane" may be considered as possessed of no common degree of dramatic interest, although their general character is of a light and agreeable cast, several of these displaying the common failing of the earlier Italian novelists, derived from ages still more rude and remote, in attempts at jests and witticisms which have little or nothing to recommend them.

NOVELLA IV.

"MY very excellent and much esteemed Count, my kind patron and benefactor, and you no less, my worthy friends, deign to hear an amusing little anecdote which I some time since happened to note down from the lips of one every way deserving of credit.

"Know, then, that in our city, altogether under the authority of the Church, there flourished a certain learned advocate, a member of the great Castello family, Messer Dionisio by name. He was a man of strong sense and great acquirements, and not unfrequently employed in high offices as the first citizen of our republic, whose true freedom and interests he so much promoted. Having occasion to enter into the legal arena with another advocate, whose name I cannot just now recollect, in a cause connected with the noble memory of Madonna Margarita, consort to Messer Pietro de' Guidori, whose property had been disputed, our friend Messer Dionisio was retained as counsel to Signor Gioanni de' Bentivoglio. It was tried before our worthy magistrate, Messer Niccoluzzo de' Piccoluomini of Sienna ; and, as it often happens to these gentlemen of the robe when deeply engaged in the interests of their clients, they became so very personal in the cause

[1] It also raged in Rome, Mantua, and Venice, in the same year.

of their principals, that at length the adversary of our worthy friend, unable to bear his bitter taunts, fairly challenged his honour and veracity, which so incensed our good citizen, Messer Dionisio, that, in a fit of sudden passion, he clenched his fist and smote his learned antagonist very severely on the mouth. The presiding magistrate, greatly scandalised at our friend's new method of enforcing his arguments, vigorously remonstrated with him, and threatened to enforce the full penalty of the law, assuring him that he dealt too mildly in not committing him on the spot; and he would have executed his menace, had not the high qualities and connections of Messer Dionisio restrained him. He replied to the threats made use of by the judge with the most perfect composure: 'Most noble prætor, according to the tenor of our civil law, I believe you will only be able to demand about ten pieces from me;' and, putting his hand into his pocket, he drew forth ten broad gold ducats, saying, 'Take only what the law allows you, and hand me the remainder back.' But the judge, seizing in a rage upon the whole, cried, 'You must apply elsewhere for the remainder!' which again brought the angry counsellor upon his legs. Turning quickly round upon his adversary, now busily employed in repairing the ruins of his jaws and uttering fierce exclamations for justice, our friend again addressed him: 'If this be the case, I must have what I have paid for over and above;' and he struck him a more violent blow than before upon his left cheek. He then addressed the judge: 'My lord, you have made me pay for more than the amount of both the arguments I have applied in the very face of my learned brother, but keep the money; he is a pitiful advocate, indeed, who would scruple to take advantage of his opponent for the sake of ten ducats. I have had my revenge.' And turning his back upon the court, he left his brother advocate quite unable to make any reply, and grievously lamenting and appealing to the magistrate for justice. He was at last obliged to be patient, for though somewhat incensed, neither the magistrate nor the audience could refrain from indulging a degree of mirth at the singular arguments of our friend Dionisio. The only sentence obtained that day in court was, 'Chi ricevette il male se n'ebbe il danno.' He who received the injury sustained all the loss."

NOVELLA IX.

"THE following story, my dear lord and patron, and you, his very noble guests, will be found to belong to the period when our valiant countrymen triumphed, near the bridge of San Ambrosio, over the troops of Encio, king of Sardinia, son of the emperor Frederic II., whose bones, as a token of our victory, are still lying, graced with a becoming epitaph, in the church of our good Frati Predicatori. The subject of the unhappy adventure which occurred about the time we speak of was one of our young fellow-citizens of the name of Malatesta, son of Alberto de' Carbonesi, sprung from an ancient and noble family,

bloom of your young affections upon him who deserves you best. It is this which has now brought me to your feet, to combat such opinions, in every way so unworthy of your father, who, not satisfied with debarring you from the indulgence of your affections for the object of your regard, would exclude and destroy them altogether. Against all reason, love, and the laws of society, he in fact tells you that you shall not wed. Most meekly, with a full heart, I conjure you not to confirm such ungenerous views: but come with me, my own love, and be the most cherished and honoured creature that ever blessed a husband's choice. Look up, then, my Lelia; tell me you will be mine, and, believe me, your friends will not only soon be reconciled, but rejoice to hear of the event.' Deep-drawn sighs, half love, half grief, were for a long time the only answer she could give, till at length a burst of tenderness and sorrow was audible. 'You have been to me,' she said, 'always a companion and friend, whom I loved beyond everything else in the world, and I know the words you speak are as sweet as they ever were, and as true. Take me, then, my lord and husband, for your worth, your virtues, and kind manners have made me, alas! too indifferent to everything else in the world. And now be happy, and doubt no more, dear Malatesta; I will follow you, though death should be my portion, wherever you please, rejoicing in my sufferings, as long as we preserve unshaken our tried and faithful love.' On these words he instantly led her away, and placing a rich diamond upon her finger, he espoused her before the holy man who had been in readiness to receive them.

"When he had borne her, with the utmost difficulty, from the paternal mansion, and was preparing to enter his own, his fair bride, turning towards the servant who had accompanied them, said, 'Tell my parents that I am now the wife of the noblest youth our city can boast, Malatesta Carbonese, who ever honoured and loved me.' Her maid, Lisetta, not without shedding tears at parting, thus replied: 'Ah! my dear young mistress, beware how you do or say anything that may wound the pride of your family, for I fear, I sadly fear'—— 'Fear nothing, but return, and answer only to such questions as may be required of you, if you are fearful of your own safety; nay, do not weep for me, Lisetta, and farewell!' The grateful and happy lover then conducted his fair bride into her new dwelling, intending on the following day to employ the interest of all his friends to obtain a speedy reconciliation with her family. Early on the following day, Donna Erminia, the young lady's mother, inquiring for her daughter, was informed by her maid, Lisetta, as she had been directed, that she had become the wedded wife of Malatesta Carbonese on the previous evening. In the utmost anger and alarm the lady immediately ran into her husband's chamber, crying, 'O Messer Paolo! we are lost, we are dishonoured! Lelia has eloped this very night with Malatesta Carbonese, into whose house she has been carried.' In an impulse of rage and grief far exceeding that of his wife, Messer Paolo instantly rose and armed himself, crying in a loud voice for his servants and his sons. Accompanied by these, he hastened to the house of Alberto Carbonese, at a short distance from his own, with purposes of the

most deadly revenge. On breaking into the place, the first object they met was a female servant, whom they instantly sacrificed to their fury. But fortunately for Alberto and two of his sons, they had set out two days before for a country-seat at Ronzano, where the estates of the family lay. Finding none of the inmates in the lower rooms, the enraged brothers immediately proceeded to search the chambers, and soon arriving at one which seemed to resist their efforts, they furiously burst it open, and rushed upon the defenceless lovers, who vainly sought to shelter each other from their impending fate. Awed by their sister's piercing cries, they stood a moment, nor ventured to stab him in her arms. But, binding his throat and face with their fierce hands, they smothered him as he lay on the bridal couch, their equally savage father having dragged the poor girl out of the chamber while the deed was done. He then drew her back by her fair hair into the fatal room, exclaiming, 'There! go take thy pleasure now, infamous wretch as thou art! thou hast given me a revenge in which I shall always exult' They then closed the door and hastened from the house. The weeping Lelia having raised herself with difficulty, in the agony of her despair cast her eyes upon the couch, and beheld the discoloured and deathlike features of her beloved. She threw herself upon the body, unconscious for a long time of her existence, but when she recovered from her swoon, as from a deep slumber in which she had forgotten what had passed, surprise and terror overwhelmed her with redoubled force, and she felt how much easier it would be to die than to recover from another such attack, into which she was very nearly relapsing Unable longer to contend with her emotions, she again threw her arms around her husband's neck, and kissing him tenderly, exclaimed, 'Alas! alas! and hast thou so soon left me? Whither is thy sweet spirit fled? May Heaven's pity be denied to those who have so basely robbed me of the dear companion of my days! And art thou gone without thy Lelia? O treacherous friends! no longer friends or relations of mine! Speak, speak to me, my love; breathe again the soft words you lately breathed into mine ear, promising me never, never more to part. Oh, dear, unhappy scene of all our bliss and woe! How soon has our supreme delight turned into bitter tears and pain, ourselves preparing the means for our cruel enemies to wreak their sad revenge! Ah! that they had first sacrificed me to their fury, and saved me from what I now feel! Oh, savage father, and more savage brothers! you will live to regret your cruelty when you behold the Lelia once so dear to you stretched lifeless before your eyes. Would to Heaven I had never consented, my love, to yield to thy honeyed words! Then I had still gazed on thee, still heard thy voice, nor been the wretch I now am. But why these vain tears and grief? It is very weak and unworthy to indulge them, when I can follow thee, my husband, and free my burthened spirit from the load it bears Shall I show myself unequal to the many bright examples of love, even unto death? No, I will die the death he died, cruel as it was. I promised to follow him to the last.'

"Saying these words, she provided herself with the very same means of destruction as had proved fatal to her unfortunate lover,

exclaiming, in the agony of her grief, 'Cruel father, and still more savage brothers! may you live long and wretchedly after my death! May Heaven deal out to you only the pity you have shown!' And then once more invoking the name of her beloved husband, she launched herself into eternity, and the fair form was soon all that remained of so much loveliness and truth.

"A crowd had gradually assembled round the mansion of Alberto after observing the furious departure of Messer Paolo and his people, and suspecting some fatal occurrence had taken place, no answer being returned to their repeated calls, several individuals made their way into the house. The first object they beheld was the murdered servant; but they were far more horror-struck, on advancing farther, to find the beautiful form of Lelia hanging lifeless on her bridal couch. Exclamations of grief and indignation burst from all around; nor was it long before the grievous tidings reached the ears of the father and friends of the unhappy youth. Hastening back with his other sons to Bologna, such was the impression produced by their representations and appearance, that the whole city rose, and the followers of both powerful families coming to action, Messer Paolo, the young bride's father, was compelled to save himself, with his son Egano, by flight, while his other two sons were taken and executed according to the laws, a decree of exile being awarded against the rest of the family.

"The remains of the unhappy lovers, wedded thus in death, were then consigned to the earth, not without the lamentation of the people, in the Church of San Giacomo, where a noble monument was raised to their memory, bearing the following inscription:—

Chi s'amò più che la sua vita in terra,
Gli nervi e l'ossa sue qui dentro serra

Their love beyond the love of life on earth,
Lies sealed in death, awaiting heavenly birth."

NOVELLA XLII.

"LISTEN, O bright and beautiful ladies, and you, most noble Count, and gentlemen all, to the following story, which I trust cannot fail to amuse you:—

"Not very long ago there were four noble, though somewhat humorous students, residing at our University of Sienna, whose names were Messer Antonio da Clerico, a canonist; Messer Giovanni da Santo Geminiano, a young jurist; Maestro Antonio di Paulo di Val d'Arno d'Arezzo; and Maestro Michel di Cosimo Aretino delli Conti di Palazzolo, who, when young, was surnamed Bacica, now a distinguished civilian in the University of Bologna, full of years and virtue, beloved by the whole people for his kind and charitable actions. But, waiving these last considerations, I proceed to inform you that while remaining in the house of the Master of the Academy of Arts, the youthful pupils became acquainted with a certain disciple of Galen,

who, though a mere quack, imagined he was possessed of more learning than Avicenna himself. His name was Niccolo da Massa, to which had been added that of *Portantino*, from the peculiarity of his ambling gait; and as his residence lay opposite to that of the governor, his singularities attracted the particular attention of the pupils.

"Now it happened that in the month of February, during the salting season, the doctor had purchased a fine pig, which he subsequently had killed, and hung up, as is usual, previous to the operation of salting, for four or five days in his kitchen. The merry scholars, aware of this stage of the proceedings, set their heads to contrive how they might feast at the doctor's charge. It so fell out that a fellow-student named Messer Pietro di Leri Martini, had lately left the academy, and afterwards died of a fever, and on this fact they resolved to ground the success of their exploit. Introducing themselves secretly into the doctor's premises, and watching their opportunity, they laid hands upon the pork, a fact which struck the doctor with equal horror and surprise when he beheld his kitchen the next morning emptied of its treasure. After indulging in a variety of imprecations and suspicions, his doubts at last fell upon his young neighbours, the scholars, who had indeed already acquired some little reputation for similar exploits. Believing that he had now discovered the authors of the diabolical theft, he waited on Messer Amadio da Citta di Castello, the presiding magistrate in Sienna, who, having heard his evidence, despatched three several messengers commanding an immediate restoration of the pork to the right owner, unless the young gentlemen wished to be proceeded against criminally. The answer which the magistrate received was, that the scholars were greatly surprised at such a message, and were sorry that they had not so fine a pig in their possession, happening to know nothing about it. But being still persecuted with the complaints of the doctor, the magistrate resolved to investigate the affair thoroughly, sending a warrant to search the scholars' chambers, and to bring them all before him should the pork be discovered in their possession. Expecting such a visit, the students were not a little puzzled how to proceed, when Messer Antonio da Clerico, who by his singular ingenuity and facetiousness had always shown himself equal to every emergency, encouraged the flagging spirits of his companions, saying, 'Fear not, my brave boys; fear not the Podesta and his myrmidons: we will be a match for them yet. We will extract a little amusement out of them, too, if you mind what I say. Let us get up a sick couch in the chamber opposite the entrance hall, and fill it with all kinds of the most sickly preparations that can disgust the human nose. And when the officers come, you must all stand at the entrance, buried in profound grief; and when they ask you what is the matter, shake your heads and point to the inner chamber, saying, "Poor fellow! he is dying of the plague." Now this sick gentleman shall be no other than the pig, and trust me, whoever ventures within sight of him shall wish himself away again as speedily as possible. For you know the whole city is disturbed about the death of our fellow-student, who died only the other day of the plague.' His companions immediately set up a loud

laugh, in token of their approbation, crying, 'Come, let us go to work, then; we cannot be hanged for it, after all.' Then preparing a table spread with cushions, they laid the pig upon it at full length, with a nightcap over his head, and stuck out his fore feet with white sleeves, so as to resemble the arms of a human being; while his hind ones were decorated with a pair of slippers. Soon after completing their arrangements, appeared the officers of the police, who, on requiring entrance, were readily admitted by the scholars, some of whom, on advancing farther, they found overwhelmed with sorrow, wringing their hands, and crying out most piteously, 'Oh, my dear, dear brother!' at which the officers, apprehending some fatal accident, inquired into the cause of their complaint. The shrewd Maestro Michel on this stepped forward: 'It is my brother, my poor brother, who is here dying, we are afraid.' 'Dying! what is the matter with him?' 'They say it is the plague; but I will never desert him!' On this one of the officers opened the chamber door with some caution, and stumbling on the shocking object which presented itself, drew back in great alarm; for on the left hand was seen Messer Antonio as the priest, administering spiritual consolation with book and crucifix in hand, and wax-lights burning, to the poor scholar, falling apparently a victim to the plague. At this overpowering sight, without saying a word, he ran out of the house, followed by his companions. Returning to the magistrate, he with difficulty made himself understood; expressing the utmost horror of the business on which he had been sent. 'How,' cried the magistrate, 'can it be true?' 'True!' returned the officer; 'I saw the poor wretch stretched out, dying of the plague, and his brother and all his companions buried in the deepest grief.' 'And did you go into the room? did you touch the body?' inquired the magistrate. 'To be sure I did.' 'Then why do you come here? Away with you, you wretches; we shall have the whole city infected;' and the magistrate drove them away, forbidding them, as they valued their lives, again to enter into his presence.

"The wily Messer Antonio, called the priest, in the meanwhile, observing the rout of these myrmidons of the law, hastily dressed himself amidst the triumph and applauses of his companions, and set out for the house of the Podesta, in order to obviate any disagreeable consequences that might attend the tidings which had just gone forth. He arrived just in time to catch the magistrate as he was proceeding to the grand council to acquaint the members with the fact which had just transpired, and propose means for the safety of the city. To him, then, Messer Antonio related the whole of the affair on the part of the scholars, as it had occurred from the beginning. It was a great relief to the magistrate to hear that there was really no pestilential disorder abroad; and he laughed outright at the humorous way in which Messer Antonio related to him the incidents of the story. 'O you collegians!' he cried, 'you are true children of perdition! There is nothing of which you are not capable; and woe to the unfortunate wretch that falls into your hands!' As they were now approaching the Palazzo delli Signori, the Podesta resolved, instead of alarming them with tidings of the plague, to amuse them with one

of the best stories which he had for some time heard. Such was the pleasure which it afforded, that they obliged its ingenious author to repeat the whole to them again, mingling their mirth with a little seasonable advice, and commanding him to make immediate restitution of the doctor's pig But to this, with one voice, the scholars all demurred, beseeching their lordships that they would not please to insist on such hard conditions, inasmuch as it would be throwing a sort of discredit on real learning were they to refuse to permit the scholars to punish so much absurd quackery and ignorance as were manifested by this disciple of Galen; and they trusted that their lordships would not interfere to interrupt the joke in the happiest stage, but would permit them to eat the pig since they had caught it. Grateful for the entertainment afforded them, the council could scarcely prevail upon themselves to treat the ingenious author of the plot with the rigour of the law, although they strongly advised restitution of the pig. But the humorous Antonio conducted his defence in so happy and eloquent a manner, that the pork was allowed to remain in the hands of the scholars, and the court adjourned. They immediately proceeded to regale themselves with the spoils they had won. Frequently that night did they drink to the health of Dr. Portantino, who had presented them with a portion of the feast, nor were the wines less relished after they had partaken of roasted pig.

Luigi da Porto.

LUIGI DA PORTO.



A SINGLE story, entitled "La Giulietta," from the pen of Luigi da Porto, a gentleman of Vicenza, will follow these remarks. Luigi sprung from a noble and ancient family of that place. He was the son of Bernardino da Porto and Lisabetta di Savorgnano. He entered early into military life, and was for some time in the service of the republic of Venice in quality of a captain of light horse, giving signal proofs of his valour during the campaigns of Gradisca and the wars connected with the famous league of Cambray. But on receiving a wound, though extremely slight, in the tendons of the neck, such was its effect as to compel him to relinquish the career of arms and render him a cripple for the remainder of his life. He subsequently retired to his native city, where he died in 1529, before he had completed the forty-fourth year of his age. He was connected with nearly all the great wits and scholars of his time, among whom he numbered Cardinal Bembo, several members of the family of Gonzaga, and many others of distinguished rank and reputation. He also enjoyed the society of Veronica Gambara and of Emilia Pia da Montefeltro, both ladies of eminent talents and accomplishments, who adorned the age in which they lived.

Perhaps the title of novelist was at one time the least of Luigi's claims, as he acquired the reputation of an elegant and accomplished scholar and poet, and displayed much classical taste in his compositions both in the Italian and Latin languages. He is said by Marzari, the historian of Vicenza, to have produced several other novels, a supposition which, if true, must lead us to deplore their loss, as there are too few in the voluminous catalogue of Italy which can boast of the purity and excellence of his "Giulietta." It is dedicated to the lady Lucina Savorgnana, one of his near relations.

There are two old editions of the "Giulietta," both published within a short period of each other at Venice. One of these has the date of 10th June 1535, 8vo, from the press of Bindoni, and the other from that of Marcolini, 8vo, 1539. A more recent one has likewise appeared, edited by the Cavalier Michel-Angiolo Zorzi of Vicenza, including the "Rime" of the author, printed in Vicenza, 4to, 1731, by Lavezzari. The story of "Giulietta" is in this edition an exact reprint from that of Marcolini, the editor not appearing to have been aware of the earlier one of Bindoni, between which and the more recent one many striking variations may be perceived. This doubtless arises from the circumstance of one of them having received the correc-

tions, and perhaps embellishments, of the celebrated Bembo, while the other was probably taken from the original MS. From a letter of Bembo, dated the 18th February 1531, addressed to Bernardino, the brother of Luigi, it appears that the writer was desirous of having in his possession the MSS. of his deceased friend. Four years subsequent to the date of this letter the novel first made its appearance, during which time it is highly probable it may have undergone the revision of Bembo. It is certain that Luigi was highly esteemed by him, as appears from a letter directed to our author during his lifetime; nor is Bembo thought by other writers to have overrated the merits of his "Giulietta," compared with the novels of his countrymen.

Though his sole remaining production in the class of fictitious narrative, it is fully sufficient to establish his claim to a high station among Italy's best novelists. He cannot, indeed, boast of the merit of its invention, but his improvements on the old story, attributed to so many different sources, and even on that of Massuccio Salernitano, are of such a kind as to give it all the effect, beauty, and pathos of an original narrative.

Though this story is extended much beyond the limits of a great portion of the Italian novelle, the translator has scarcely thought himself at liberty to make the least alteration or curtailment, no less on account of its own intrinsic merits, than its relation to one of the sweetest and most favourite productions of England's greatest dramatist. Not that this tale supplied Shakespeare with the plot and incidents of his "Romeo and Juliet," which are evidently taken from a version of Massuccio's story of an earlier date, but it may serve to show how far the dramatist, who has not, indeed, improved upon his model of Massuccio, has fallen short of the pathetic beauty of Luigi da Porto's story in its conclusion. It is only in the latter that we meet with the affecting circumstance of Juliet rising from her trance before the death of Romeo, all other versions of the story omitting a scene so essential to the pathos of the catastrophe. And though the rest of the variations in these different productions are of minor importance, they will uniformly be found in favour of Luigi da Porto; a circumstance which strongly favours the supposition that Shakespeare never perused his novel. He must have been misled, then, on this point, by the metrical history of "Romeus and Giuliet," which was taken, as Mr. Dunlop remarks, from several minute coincidences, from the old drama by Luigi da Groto, which accords with Shakespeare's in many particulars. In both there is a garrulous old nurse, and it would appear from several other particulars pointed out by Mr. Walker, in his "Memoir on Italian Tragedy," that the old play by Da Groto must have been seen by the English dramatist.

But though not the exact source from which Shakespeare drew one of the earliest and most favourite of his dramas, it is this Italian story which has since suggested the improvement that has been adopted on the stage at its close, where Romeo does not expire before the revival of Juliet. Besides, its own dramatic interest and its language and character, are altogether such as to place it among the happiest specimens in the class of pathetic novelle. Still, its merits will be

found to consist, with very few exceptions, in the superior manner in which it has been treated, as there is too striking a coincidence between the works of Da Porto and of Massuccio to allow us to believe that the author of "Giulietta" was not acquainted with the "Mariotto" and "Giannozza" of his predecessor. In most of the leading circumstances, though not in the conclusion, they are precisely similar. Luigi himself, however, asserts that the story was related to him while serving as a soldier in Friuli, by one of his archers who usually attended him, to beguile the solitary road leading from Gradisca to Udino. But it is certain that the same story had long before been familiar to the writers of various countries, wheresoever it may have first taken its origin, whether derived in some connected chain of tradition from one source, or, as is more probable, founded on a similar occurrence in different countries. It has been traced to a Greek romance, and was historically treated as a real event by Girolamo della Corte in his history of Verona. It also forms the ninth of the second part of Bandello's novels, borrowed from Luigi da Porto, where the event is said to have happened in the time of Bartolommeo della Scala. this tale corresponds very nearly with the novel of "Giulietta." The same story passed into France, where it is related by Adrien Sevin of two Sclavonians residing in the Morea. Thus it was adopted into the tragic stories of Belleforest, and likewise into Painter's "Palace of Pleasure." From its traditionary character, therefore, it is not impossible that Luigi da Porto may have heard it from the lips of one of his archers, though this can hardly be reconciled with the numerous coincidences that exist between his story and that of Massuccio.

There are several other dramas besides Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet" founded upon the same subject, but none nearly so faithful to the simplicity and pathos of the original as found in the novels of Da Porto and Massuccio If Shakespeare was unfortunate in not preserving one of the most touching incidents in the catastrophe, it is a fault in him scarcely perceptible, and amply compensated by such transcendent beauty of language and sentiment as appeals with irresistible force to the soul of the reader, leaving the plot, so essential to the success of other writers, with him only a secondary consideration But in other dramatists, their departure from the truth and beauty of the story has been wilful, nor atoned for by those superior charms of sentiment and passion which he scattered with so profuse a hand in the works of its English imitator. Two of these rival productions are from the pens of Spanish dramatists, contemporary likewise with Shakespeare, one being written by the prolific Lope de Vega, and the other by Fernando Roxas, which, of the two, approaches nearest to the English "Romeo and Juliet" But in Lope, the names as well as the incidents are altered, and the tragic close is turned into "a merry meeting" and a marriage sanctioned by the lady's friends The Spanish lover has the grave precaution not to swallow poison before visiting the tomb of the lady, and on her recovery from her trance, he forthwith escorts her to a castle of her father's, but seldom frequented by the aged gentleman. There, however, preparing to celebrate a new marriage, he is somewhat surprised to meet with his

the means of further reconciliation between the houses, even now wearied with their mutual feuds; and, "Oh!" she exclaimed, "what a blissful means of changing foes into relatives!" Fixed in this resolve, she again met Romeo with eyes of softness and regard. Mutually animated with equal ardour and admiration, the loved image was fixed so deeply in their imagination, that they could no longer refrain from seeing each other, and sometimes at the windows and sometimes in the church, they sought with avidity every occasion to express their mutual passion through their eyes, and neither of them seemed to enjoy rest out of the presence of the beloved object. But chiefly Romeo, fired at the sight of her exquisite charms and manners, braved all risks for the pleasure of having her near him; and he would frequently pass the greatest part of the night around her house, beneath her windows, or, scaling the walls, force his way to the balcony that commanded a view of her chamber, without the knowledge either of herself or others; and there he would sit for hours, gazing and listening his soul away, enamoured of her looks and voice. He would afterwards throw himself listlessly to sleep, careless of returning home, in the woods or in the roads. But one evening, as love would have it, the moon shining out more brightly than usual, the adventurous Romeo was discovered by his lady, as she opened the casement, on the balcony. Imagining that it might be some one else, he retreated, when, catching a glimpse of his figure, she gently called to him, "Wherefore, O Romeo, come you hither?" "It is the will of love: therefore do I come," he replied. "And if you should be found here, Romeo, know you it will be sudden death?" "Too well I do, dear lady, and I doubt not it will happen so some night, if you refuse me your aid. But as I must at some time die, wherever I may be, I would rather yield my breath here as near you as I dare, with whom I would ever choose to live, did Heaven and you consent." To which words the lady replied, "Believe me, Romeo, it is not I who would forbid thee to remain honourably at my side; it is thou, and the enmity thou and thine bear us, that stand between us twain." "Yet can I truly aver," replied the youth, "that the dearest hope I have long indulged has been to make you mine; and if you had equal wishes, on you alone it would rest to make me for ever yours: no hand of man, believe me, love, should sunder us again." On saying this, they agreed on further means to meet again, and converse much longer some future evening, and they retired, full of each other, to rest.

The noble youth having frequently in this way held appointments with her, one winter's evening, while the snow fell thick and fast about him, he called to her from the usual spot: "Ah, Juliet, Juliet! how long will you see me thus languishing in vain? Do you feel nothing for me, who through these cold nights, exposed to the stormy weather, wait on the cold ground to behold you?" "Alas! alas! I do indeed pity you," returned a sweet voice, "but what would you that I should do? often have I besought you to go away." "No, no," returned Romeo, "not away: and therefore, gentle lady, deign to give me refuge in your chamber from these bitter winds." Turning towards him with a somewhat scornful voice, the lady reproached him:

"Romeo, I love you as much as it is possible for woman to love; therefore it is that you ask me this; your worth has led me further than I ought to go. But, cruel as you are, if you dream that you can enjoy my love by long prevailing suit in the manner you imagine, lay such thoughts aside, for you deceive yourself, Montecchi. And as I will no longer see you nightly perilling your life for me, I frankly tell you, Romeo, that if you please to take me as I am, I will joyfully become your wife, giving myself up wholly to your will, ready to follow you over the world wherever you may think best." "And this," replied the gentle youth, "is all I have so long wished; now then let it be done!" "So let it be, even as you will," cried Juliet; "only permit the Friar Lorenzo da San Francesco, my confessor, first to knit our hands, if you wish me wholly and happily to become yours." "Am I to suppose, then, that Friar Lorenzo, my love, is acquainted with the secret of your breast?" "Yes, Romeo," returned Juliet, "and he will be ready to grant us what we request of him;" and here, having fixed upon the proper measures, they again took leave of each other.

The friar, who belonged to the minor order of Ossérvanza, was a very learned man, well skilled no less in natural than in magical arts, and was extremely intimate with Romeo, in whom he had found it necessary to confide on an occasion in which he might otherwise have forfeited his reputation, which he was very desirous of maintaining with the vulgar. He had fixed upon Romeo in his emergency, as the most brave and prudent gentleman he knew to trust with the affair he had in hand. To him only he unbosomed his whole soul, and Romeo, having now recourse to him in his turn, acquainted him with his resolution of making the lovely daughter of Messer Antonio as quickly as possible his wedded wife, and that they had together fixed upon him as the secret instrument and witness of their nuptials, and afterwards as the medium of their reconciliation with her father.

The friar immediately signified his consent, no less because he ventured not to oppose or disoblige the lover, than because he believed it might be attended with happy results; in which case he would be likely to derive great honour from the heads of both houses, as the means of their reconciliation. In the meanwhile, it being the season of Lent, the fair Juliet, under semblance of going to confession, sought the residence of Friar Francesco, and having entered into one of the confessionals made use of by the monks, she inquired for Lorenzo, who, hearing her voice, led her along after Romeo into the convent. Then closing the doors of the confessional, he removed an iron grate which had hitherto separated her from her lover, saying, "I have been always glad to see you, my daughter; but you will now be far dearer to me than ever if you wish to receive Messer Romeo here as your husband." To which Juliet answered that there was nothing she so much wished as that she might lawfully become his wife, and that she had therefore hastened thither, in order that before Heaven and him, she might take those vows which love and honour required, and which the friar must witness, as her trust in him was great.

Then in the presence of the priest, who performed the ceremony under the seal of confession, Romeo espoused the fair young Juliet; and

having concluded how they were to meet each other again at night, exchanging a single kiss, they took leave of the friar, who remained in the confessional awaiting the arrival of penitents. Having thus secretly obtained the object of their wishes, the youthful Romeo and his bride for many days enjoyed the most unalloyed felicity, hoping at the same time for a favourable occasion to become reconciled to her father, in acquainting him with their marriage. But Fortune, as if envious of their supreme happiness, just at this time revived the old deadly feud between the houses in such a way, that in a few days, neither of them wishing to yield to the other, the Montecchi and the Cappelletti meeting together, from words proceeded to blows. Desirous to avoid giving any mortal hurts to his sweet wife's relatives, Romeo had the sorrow of beholding his own party either wounded or driven from the streets, and incensed with passion against Tebaldo Cappelletti, the most formidable of his adversaries, he struck him dead at his feet with a single blow, and put his companions to flight, terrified at the loss of their chief. The homicide had been witnessed by too many to remain long a secret, and the complaint being brought before the prince, the Cappelletti threw the blame exclusively on Romeo, who was sentenced by the council to perpetual banishment from Verona. It is easier for those who truly love to imagine than it is here to describe, the sensations of the young bride on receiving these tidings. She wept long and bitterly, refusing to hear any consolation; and her grief was deepened by the reflection that she could share it with no one. Romeo, on the other hand, regretted leaving his country on her account alone, and resolving to take a sorrowful farewell of the object of all his soul's wishes, he had again recourse to the assistance of the friar, who despatched a faithful follower of Romeo's father to apprise his wife of the time and place of meeting, and thither she eagerly repaired. Retiring together into the confessional, they there wept bitterly over their misfortune. The young bride at length, checking her tears, exclaimed in an accent of despair, "I cannot bear to live! What will my life be without you? Oh, let me fly with you; wherever you go I will follow, a faithful and loving servant. I will cast these long tresses away, and by none shall you be served so well, so truly, as by me." "No, never let it be said," replied Romeo, "that you accompanied me in other guise than in that of a cherished and honoured bride. Yet were it not that I feel assured that our affairs will soon improve, and that the strife between our two families will very shortly cease, indeed I could not bear, my love, to leave you. We shall not long be divided, and my thoughts, sweet Juliet, will be ever with you. And should we not be quickly restored to each other, it will then be time to fix how we are to meet again." So, after having wept and embraced each other again and again, they tore themselves asunder, his wife entreating that he would remain as near her as possible, and by no means go so far as Rome or Florence.

After concealing himself for some time in the monastery of Friar Lorenzo, Romeo set out more dead than alive for Mantua, but not before he had agreed with the servant of the lady that he was to be informed, through the friar, of every particular that might occur during

his absence; and he further instructed the servant, as he valued his protection and rewards, to obey his wife in the minutest things which she might require of him. After her husband had departed, she gave herself up a prey to the deepest grief, a grief so incessant as to leave its traces on her beauty, and attract the attention of her mother. She tenderly loved her daughter, and affectionately inquiring into the cause of her affliction, she merely received vague excuses in reply. "But you are always in tears, my daughter," she continued; "what is it that can affect you thus? Tell me, for you are dear to me as my own life, and if it depend upon me, you shall no longer weep." Then imagining that her daughter might probably wish to bestow her hand in marriage, yet be afraid of avowing her wishes, she determined to speak to her husband on the subject; and thus, in the hope of promoting her health and happiness, she pursued the very means that led to her destruction.

She informed Messer Antonio that she had observed, for many days past, that something was preying on their daughter's mind, that she was no longer like the same creature, and that although she had used every means to obtain her confidence as to the source of her affliction, it had been all in vain. She then urged her suspicions that Juliet perhaps wished to marry, but that, like a discreet girl as she certainly was, she was averse to declare her feelings. "So I think, Messer Antonio, we had better without more delay make choice for our daughter of a noble husband. Juliet has already completed her eighteenth year, on St. Euphemia's Day; and when they have advanced much beyond this period, the beauty of women, so far from improving, is rather on the wane. Besides," continued her mother, "it is not well to keep girls too long at home, though our Juliet has always been an excellent child. I am aware you have already fixed upon her dower, and we have nothing to do but to select a proper object for her love." Messer Antonio agreed with his lady, and highly commended the virtues and the prudence of his daughter. Not many days afterwards they proposed and entered into a treaty of marriage between the Count of Lodrone and their daughter. When it was on the point of being concluded, the lady, hoping to surprise her daughter with the agreeable tidings, bade her now rejoice, for that in a very few days she would be happily settled in marriage with a noble youth, and that she must no longer grieve, for it would take place with her father's consent and that of all her friends.

On hearing these words, Juliet burst into a flood of tears, while her mother endeavoured to console her with the hope of being happily settled in life within the course of eight days. "You will then become the wife of Count Lodrone; nay, do not weep, for it is really true: will you not be happy, Juliet, then?" "No, no, my dear mother, I shall never be happy." "Then what can be the matter with you? What do you want? Only tell me; I will do anything you wish." "Then I would wish to die, mother; nothing else is left me now." Her mother then first became aware that she was the victim of some deep-seated passion, and saying little more, she left her. In the evening she related to her husband what had passed, at which he

testified great displeasure, saying that it would be necessary to have the affair examined into before venturing to proceed further with the Count. And fearful lest any blame might attach to his family, he soon after sent for Juliet, with the intention of consulting her on the proposed marriage. "It is my wish, my dear Juliet, to form an honourable connection for you in marriage. Will you be satisfied with it?" After remaining silent for some moments, his daughter replied, "No, dear father, I cannot be satisfied." "Am I to suppose, then, that you wish to take the veil, daughter?" "Indeed I know not what"—— and with these words out gushed a flood of bitter tears. "But this I know," returned her father, "you shall give your hand to Count Lodrone, and therefore trouble yourself no further." "Never, never!" cried Juliet, still weeping bitterly. On this Messer Antonio threatened her with his heaviest displeasure did she again venture to dispute his will, commanding her immediately to reveal the cause of her unhappiness. And when he could obtain no other reply than sobs and tears, he quitted the apartment in a violent passion, unable to penetrate into her motives, leaving her with her mother alone. The wretched bride had already acquainted the servant intrusted with their secret, whose name was Pietro, with everything which had passed between herself and her parents, taking him to witness that she would sooner die than become the wife of any lord but Romeo. And this the good Pietro had carefully conveyed through the friar to the ears of the banished man, who had written to her, encouraging her to persevere, and by no means to betray the secret of their love, as he was then taking measures, within less than ten days, to bear her from her father's house. Messer Antonio and his lady Giovanna being unable in the meanwhile, either by threats or kindness, to discover their daughter's objections to the marriage, or whether she was attached to another, determined to prosecute their design. "Weep no more, girl," cried her mother, "for married you shall be, though you were to take one of the Montecchi by the hand, which I am sure you will never be compelled to do!" Fresh sobs and tears at these words burst from the poor girl, which only served to hasten the preparations for their daughter's nuptials. Her despair was terrible when she heard the day named, and calling upon death to save her, she rushed out of her chamber, and repairing as fast as possible to the convent of the friar, in whom, next to Romeo, she trusted, and from whom she had received tidings of her husband, she revealed to him the cause of her anguish, often interrupted by her tears. She then conjured him, by the friendship and obligations which he owed to Romeo, to assist her in this her utter need. "Alas! of what use can I be," replied the friar, "when your two houses are even now so violently opposed to each other?" "But I know, father, that you are a learned and experienced man, and you can assist me in many ways if you please. If you should refuse me everything else, at least, however, grant me this. My nuptials are even now preparing in my father's palace; he is now gone out of the city to give orders at the villa on the Mantuan road, whither they are about to carry me, that I may there be compelled to receive the Count, without a chance

of opposition, as he is to meet me on my arrival at the place. Give me, therefore, poison, to free me at once from the grief and shame of exposing the wife of Romeo to such a scene. Give me poison, or I will myself plunge a dagger into my bosom!"

The friar, on hearing these desperate intentions, and aware how deeply he was implicated with Romeo, who might become his worst enemy were he not in some way to obviate the danger, turning to Juliet, said, "You know, my daughter, that I confess a great portion of the people here, and am respected by all, no testament, no reconciliation taking place without my mediation. I am therefore careful of giving rise to any suspicions which might affect me, and should especially wish to conceal my interference in an affair like the present. I would not incur such a scandal for all the treasure in the world. But, as I am attached both to yourself and Romeo, I will exert myself in your favour in such a way as I believe no one ever before did. You must first, however, take a vow that you will never betray to others the secret I now intrust you with." "Speak, speak boldly, father," cried Juliet, "and give me the poison, for I will inform nobody." "I will give you no poison," returned the friar, "young and beautiful as you are, it would be too deep a sin. But if you possess courage to execute what I shall propose, I trust I may be able to deliver you safely into the hands of Romeo You are aware that the family vault of the Cappelletti lies beyond this church in the cemetery of our convent. Now I will give you a certain powder, which, when you have taken it, will throw you into a deep slumber of eight and forty hours, and during that time you will be to all appearance dead, not even the most skilful physicians being able to detect a spark of life remaining. In this state you will be interred in the vault of the Cappelletti, and at a fitting season I will be in readiness to take you away, and bring you to my own cell, where you can stay until I go, which will not be long, to the chapter; after which, disguised in a monk's dress, I will bear you myself to your husband. But tell me, are you not afraid of being near the corpse of Tebaldo, your cousin, so recently interred in the same place?" With serene and joyful looks the young bride returned, "No, father; for if by such means I can ever reach my Romeo, I would face not this alone, but the terrors of hell itself." "This is well; let it be done," cried the friar, "but first write with your own hand an exact account of the whole affair to Romeo, lest by any mischance, supposing you dead, he may be impelled by his despair to do some desperate deed; for I am sure he is passionately attached to you. There are always some of my brethren who have occasion to go to Mantua, where your husband resides let me have your letter to him, and I will send it by a faithful messenger."

Having said this, the good monk, without the interference of whose holy order we find no matters of importance transacted, leaving the lady in the confessional, returned to his cell, but soon came back bringing a small vase with the powder in it, saying, "Drink this, mixed with simple water, about midnight, and fear not. In two hours after it will begin to take effect, and I doubt not but our design will be crowned with success. But haste, and forget not to write the letter,

as I have directed you, to Romeo, for it is of great importance." Securing the powder, the fair bride hastened joyfully home to her mother, saying, "Truly, dear mother, Friar Lorenzo is one of the best confessors in the world. He has so kindly advised me that I am quite recovered from my late unhappiness." Overjoyed on perceiving her daughter's cheerfulness, the Lady Giovanna replied, "And you shall return his kindness, my dear girl, with interest; his poor brethren shall never be in want of alms." Juliet's recovered spirits now banished every suspicion from the mind of her parents of her previous attachment to another, and they believed that some unhappy incident had given rise to the strange and melancholy disposition they had observed They would now have been glad to withdraw their promise of bestowing her hand upon the Count, but they had already proceeded so far that they could not, without much difficulty, retreat. Her lover was desirous that some one of his friends should see her, and her mother, Lady Giovanna, being somewhat delicate in her health, it was resolved that her daughter, accompanied by two of her aunts, should be carried to the villa at a short distance from the city—a step to which she made no opposition. She accordingly went; and imagining that her father would immediately on her arrival insist upon the marriage, she took care to secure the powder given to her by the friar. At the approach of midnight, calling one of her favourite maids, brought up with her from her childhood, she requested her to bring her a glass of water, observing that she felt very thirsty; and as she drank it in the presence of the maid and one of her aunts, she exclaimed that her father should never bestow her hand upon the Count against her own consent These simple women, though they had observed her throw the powder into the water, which she said was to refresh her, suspected nothing further and went to rest. When the servant had retired with the light, her young mistress rose from her bed, dressed herself, and again lay down, composing her decent limbs as if she were never more to rise, with her hands crossed upon her breast, awaiting the dreaded result. In little more than two hours she lay to all appearance dead, and in this state she was discovered the next morning. The maid and her aunt, unable to awake her, feeling that she was already quite cold, and recollecting the powder, the strange expressions she had used, and, above all, seeing her dressed, began to scream aloud, supposing her to have poisoned herself. On this, the cries of her own maid, who loved her, were terrible. "True, too true, dear lady: you said that your father should never marry you against your will. Alas! you asked me for the very water which was to occasion your death Wretch that I am! And have you indeed left me, and left me thus? With my own hands I gave you the fatal cup, which, with yours, will have caused the death of your father, your mother, and us all. Ah! why did you not take me with you, who have always so dearly loved you in life?" And saying this she threw herself by the side of her young mistress, embracing her cold form. Messer Antonio, hearing a violent uproar, hastened, trembling, to ascertain the cause, and the first object he beheld was his daughter stretched out in her chamber a corpse. Although he believed her gone beyond recovery, when he

heard what she had drunk, he immediately sent to Verona for a very experienced physician, who having carefully observed and examined his daughter, declared that she had died of the effects of the poison more than six hours before.

The wretched father, on hearing his worst fears confirmed, was overwhelmed with grief; and the same tidings reaching the distracted mother, suddenly deprived her of all consciousness. When she was at length restored, she tore her hair, and calling upon her daughter's name, filled the air with her shrieks. "She is gone! the only sweet solace of my aged days. Cruel, cruel! thou hast left me without even giving thy poor mother a last farewell! At least I might have drunk thy last words and sighs, and closed thine eyes in peace. Let my women come about me, let them assist me, that I may die! if they have any pity left, they will kill me; far better so to die than of a lingering death of grief. O God! in Thy infinite mercy take me away, for my life will be a burden to me now!" Her women then came round her, and bore her to the couch, still weeping, and refusing all the consolation they could offer to her. The body of Juliet was in the meantime carried to Verona, and consigned with extraordinary ceremonies, amidst the lamentations of a numerous train of friends and relatives, to the vault in the cemetery of San Francesco, where the last rites to the dead were discharged.

The friar having occasion to be absent from the city, had, according to his promise, confided Juliet's letter to Romeo to the hands of one of his brethren going to Mantua. On arriving, he called several times at the house without having the good fortune to meet with Romeo, and unwilling to trust such a letter to others, he retained it in his own hands, until Pietro, hearing of the death of Juliet, and not finding the friar in the city, resolved to bear the unhappy tidings to his master. He arrived in Mantua the following night, and meeting with Romeo, who had not yet received the letter from the priest, he related to him, with tears in his eyes, the death of his young bride, whose burial he had himself witnessed. The hue of death stole over the features of Romeo as he proceeded with the sad story; and, drawing his sword, he was about to stab himself on the spot, had he not been prevented by force. "It is well," he cried, "but I shall not long survive the lady of my soul, whom I valued more than life! O Juliet, Juliet! it is thy husband who doomed thee to death! I came not, as I promised, to bear thee from thy cruel father, whilst thou, to preserve thy sweet faith unbroken, hast died for me; and shall I, through fear of death, survive alone? No, this shall never be!" Then, throwing a dark cloak which he wore over Pietro's shoulders, he cried, "Away, away! leave me!" Romeo closed the doors after him, and preferring every other evil to that of life, only considered the best manner of getting rid of it. At last he assumed the dress of a peasant, and taking out a species of poison which he had always carried with him, to use in case of emergency, he placed it under the sleeve of his coat, and immediately set out on his return to Verona. Journeying on with wild and melancholy thoughts, he now defied his fate, hoping to fall by the hands of justice, or to lay himself down in the vault by the side of her he loved and die.

In this resolution, on the evening of the following day after her interment, he arrived at Verona without being discovered by any one The same night, as soon as the city became hushed, he resorted to the convent of the Frati Minori, where the tombs of the Cappelletti lay. The church was situated in the Cittadella, where the monks at that time resided, although, for some reason, they have since left it for the suburb of San Zeno, now called Santo Bernardino, and the Cittadella was formerly, indeed, inhabited by San Francesco himself. Near the outer walls of this place there were then placed a number of large monuments such as we see round many churches, and beneath one of these was the ancient sepulchre of all the Cappelletti, in which the beautiful bride then lay. Romeo approaching near not long after midnight, and possessing great strength, removed the heavy covering by force, and with some wooden stakes which he had brought with him, he propped it up to prevent it from closing again until he wished it, and he then entered the tomb and replaced the covering. The lamp he carried cast a lurid light around, while his eyes wandered in search of the loved object, which, bursting open the living tomb, he quickly found. He beheld the features of the beautiful Juliet now mingled with a heap of lifeless dust and bones, on which a sudden tide of sorrow sprung into his eyes, and amidst bitter sobs he thus spoke. "O eyes, which while our loves to Heaven were dear, shone sweetly upon mine! O sweeter mouth, a thousand and a thousand times so fondly kissed by me alone, and rich in honeyed words! O bosom, in which my whole heart lay treasured up, alas! all closed and mute and cold I find ye now! My hapless wife, what hath love done for thee, but led thee hither? And why so soon two wretched lovers perish? I had not looked for this when hope and passion first whispered of other things. But I have lived to witness even this!" and he pressed his lips to her mouth and bosom, mingling his kisses with his tears. "Walls of the dead!" he cried, "why fall ye not around me and crush me into dust? Yet, as death is in the power of all, it is a despicable thing to wish yet fear it too." Then taking out the poison from under his vest, he thus continued: "By what strange fatality am I brought to die in the sepulchre of my enemies, some of whom this hand hath slain? But as it is pleasant to die near those we love, now, my beloved, let me die!" Then seizing the fatal vial, he poured its whole contents into his frame, and catching the fair body of Juliet in his arms in a wild embrace, "Still so sweet," he cried, "dear limbs, mine, only mine! And if yet thy pure spirit live, my Juliet, let it look from its seat of bliss to witness and forgive my cruel death; as I could not delighted live with thee, it is not forbidden me with thee to die;" and winding his arms about her, he awaited his final doom. The hour was now arrived when, the vital powers of the slumbering lady reviving, and subduing the icy coldness of the poison, she would awake Thus straitly folded in the last embraces of Romeo, she suddenly recovered her senses, and uttering a deep sigh, she cried, "Alas! where am I? in whose arms, whose kisses? Oh, unbind me, wretch that I am! Base friar, is it thus you keep your word to Romeo, thus lead me to his arms?" Great was her husband's surprise to

feel Juliet alive in his embrace. Recalling the idea of Pygmalion, "Do you know me, sweet wife?" he cried. "It is your love, your Romeo, hither come to die with you. I came alone and secretly from Mantua to find your place of rest." Finding herself within the sepulchre and in the arms of Romeo, Juliet would not at first give credit to her senses; but, springing out of his arms, gazed a moment eagerly on his face, and the next fell on his neck with a torrent of tears and kisses "O Romeo, Romeo! what madness brings you hither? Were not my letters which I sent you by the friar enough to tell you of my feigned death, and that I should shortly be restored to you?" The wretched youth, aware of the whole calamity, then gave loose to his despair. "Beyond all other griefs that lovers ever bore, Romeo, thy lot has been! My life, my soul, I never had thy letters!" And he told her the piteous tale which he had heard from the lips of her servant, and that, concluding she was dead, he had hastened to keep her company, and had already drunk the deadly draught. At these last words, his unhappy bride, uttering a wild scream, began to beat her breast and tear her hair, and then in a state of distraction she threw herself by the side of Romeo, already lying on the ground, and pouring over him a deluge of tears, imprinted her last kisses on his lips. All pale and trembling, she cried, "Oh, my Romeo! will you die in my sight, and I too the occasion of your death? Must I live even a moment after you? Ah, would that I could give my life for yours! Would that I alone might die!" In a faint and dying tone her husband replied, "If my love and truth were ever dear to you, my Juliet, live, for my sake live; for it is sweet to know that you will then be often thinking of him who now dies for you, with his eyes still fixed on yours" "Die! yes! you die for the death which in me was only feigned! What, therefore, should I do for this your real, cruel death? I only grieve that I have no means of accompanying you, and hate myself that I must linger on earth till I obtain them. But it shall not be long before the wretch who caused your death shall follow you;" and uttering these words with pain, she swooned away upon his body. On again reviving, she felt she was catching the last breath, which now came thick and fast, from the breast of her husband.

Friar Lorenzo, in the meanwhile, aware of the supposed death and of the interment of Juliet, and knowing that the termination of her slumber was near, proceeded with a faithful companion about an hour before sunrise to the monument. On approaching the place, he heard her sobs and cries, and saw the light of a lamp through an aperture in the sepulchre. Surprised at this, he imagined that Juliet must have secreted the light in the monument, and awaking and finding no one there, had thus began to weep and bewail herself. But on opening the sepulchre with the help of his companion, he beheld the weeping and distracted Juliet holding her dying husband in her arms, on which he immediately said, "What! did you think, my daughter, I should leave you here to die?" To which she only answered with another burst of sorrow, "No! away! I only fear lest I should be made to live. Away, and close our sepulchre over our heads, here

let me die. Or, in the name of pity, lend me a dagger, that I may strike it into my bosom and escape from my woes. Ah, cruel father! well hast thou fulfilled thy promise, well delivered to Romeo his letters, and wed me, and borne me safely to him! See, he is lying dead in my arms." and she repeated the fatal tale. Thunderstruck at these words, the friar gazed upon the dying Romeo, exclaiming with horror, "My friend, my Romeo! alas! what chance hath torn thee from us? Thy Juliet calls thee, Romeo. look up and hope. Thou art lying in her beauteous bosom and wilt not speak." On hearing her loved name, he raised his languid eyes, heavy with death, and fixing them on her for a short space closed them again. The next moment, turning himself round upon his face in a last struggle, he expired.

Thus wretchedly fell the noble youth, long lamented over by his fair bride, till, on the approach of day, the friar tenderly inquired what she would wish to do. "To be left to die where I am," was the reply. "Do not, daughter, say this, but come with me: for though I scarcely know in what way to proceed, I can perhaps find means of obtaining a refuge for you in some monastery, where you may address your prayers to Heaven for your own and for your husband's sake." "I desire you to do nothing for me," replied Juliet: "except this one thing, which I trust, for the sake of his memory," pointing to the body of Romeo, "you will do. Never breathe a syllable to any one living of our unhappy death, that our bodies may rest here together for ever in peace. And should our sad loves come to light, I pray you will beseech both our parents to permit our remains to continue mingled together in this sepulchre, as in love and in death we were still one." Then turning again towards the body of Romeo, whose head she held sustained upon her lap, and whose eyes she had just closed, bathing his cold features with her tears, she addressed him as if he had been in life: "What shall I now do, my dear lord, since you have deserted me? What can I do but follow you? for nothing else is left me: death itself shall not keep me from you." Having said this, and feeling the full weight of her irreparable loss in the death of her noble husband, resolute to die, she drew in her breath, and retaining it for some time, suddenly uttered a loud shriek and fell dead by her lover's side. The friar, perceiving that she was indeed dead, was seized with such a degree of terror and surprise, that, unable to come to any resolution, he sat down with his companion in the sepulchre bewailing the destiny of the lovers. At this time some of the officers of the police, being in search of a notorious robber, arrived at the spot, and perceiving a light and the sound of voices, they straightway ran to the place, and seizing upon the priests, inquired into their business. Friar Lorenzo, recognising some of these men, was overpowered with shame and fear; but assuming a lofty voice, exclaimed, "Back, sirs, I am not the man you take me for. What you are in want of you must search for elsewhere." Their conductor then came forward, saying, "We wish to be informed why the monument of the Cappelletti is thus violated by night, when a young lady of the family has been so recently interred here. And were I not acquainted with your excellent character, Friar Lorenzo, I should say you had come

hither to despoil the dead." The priests having extinguished the lamp, then replied, "We shall not render an account of our business to you; it is not your affair." "That is true," replied the other; "but I must report it to the Prince." The friar, with a feeling of despair, then cried out, "Say what you please;" and closing up the entrance into the tomb, he went into the church with his companion.

The morning was somewhat advanced when the friars disengaged themselves from the officers, one of whom soon related to the Cappelletti the whole of this strange affair. They, knowing that Friar Lorenzo had been very intimate with Romeo, brought him before the Prince, entreating, that if there were no other means, he might be compelled by torture to confess his reason for opening the sepulchre of the Cappelletti. The Prince having placed him under a strict guard, proceeded to interrogate him wherefore he had visited the tomb of the Cappelletti, as he was resolved to discover the truth. "I will confess everything very freely," exclaimed the friar. "I was the confessor of the daughter of Messer Antonio, lately deceased in so very strange a manner. I loved her for her worth, and being compelled to be absent at the time of her interment, I went to offer up certain prayers over her remains, which when nine times repeated by my beads, have power to liberate her spirit from the pangs of purgatory. And because few appreciate or understand such matters, the wretches assert that I went there for the purpose of despoiling the body. But I trust I am better known. This poor gown and girdle are enough for me, and I would not take a mite from all the treasures of the earth, much less the shrouds of the departed. They do me great wrong to suspect me of this crime." The Prince would have been satisfied with this explanation, had it not been for the interference of other monks, who, jealous of the friar, and hearing that he had been found in the monument, examined further, and found the dead body of Romeo, a fact which was immediately made known to the Prince while still speaking to the friar. This appeared incredible to every one present, and excited the utmost amazement through the city. The friar, then aware that it would be in vain further to conceal his knowledge of the affair, fell at the feet of his Excellency, crying, "Pardon, oh pardon, most noble Prince! I have said what is not truth, yet neither for any evil purpose nor for love of gain have I said it, but to preserve my faith entire, which I promised to two deceased and unhappy lovers." On this the friar was compelled to repeat the whole of the preceding tale. The Prince, moved almost to tears as he listened, set out with a vast train of people to the monument of the family, and having ordered the bodies of the lovers to be placed in the Church of San Francesco, he summoned their fathers and friends to attend. There was now a fresh burst of sorrow springing from a double source. Although the parties had been the bitterest enemies, they embraced one another in tears, and the scene before them suddenly wrought that change in their hearts and feelings which neither the threats of their Prince nor the prayers of their friends had been able to accomplish. Their hatred became extinguished in the mingled blood of their unhappy children. A noble monument was erected to their memory, on which was inscribed the occasion of their

death, and their bodies were entombed together with great splendour and solemnity, and wept over no less by their friends and relatives than by the whole afflicted city. Such a fearful close had the loves of Romeo and Juliet, such as you have heard, and as it was related to me by Pellegrino da Verona.

But whither art thou now fled, sweet piety and faith in woman? What living instance could we boast of that truth, proved unto death, shown by Juliet to her Romeo? Can it be that her praises shall not soon be sung by the most eloquent and gifted tongues? How many are there, who, in these times, instead of falling by the side of their departed lovers, would have turned their thoughts only to obtaining others? For if I now behold them capable, against every obligation of fidelity and true service, of rejecting those who once were dear to them, when they become oppressed by Fortune, what are we to believe their conduct would be after their death? Unfortunate are the lovers of this age, who can never flatter themselves, either by long devoted service, or by yielding up their very lives, that their ladies will consent to die with them. They are rather, on the other hand, assured that they are no further objects of regard than inasmuch as they devote themselves altogether to the good-will and pleasure of their ladies.

Bernardo Illicini.

BERNARDO ILLICINI.



THIS writer is chiefly distinguished in the literary annals of his country by his critical and philosophical labours, though, like Machiavelli, he acquired no little reputation by the production of a single novel, which attracted the regard and admiration of his contemporaries. It was esteemed by the author's Italian friends and contemporaries, from the nobleness and the beauty of its sentiments, as a somewhat singular exception to the usual tenor of the Italian novels, more especially of such as turn upon the attachment of lovers. For a similar reason, perhaps, it has been well entitled, "A very rare instance of magnanimity and courtesy that took place between two noble gentlemen of Sienna; with a very interesting disputation upon the same between three young ladies who heard it related." If we ought to form our estimate rather from merit than from number, this writer will be found justly entitled to rank among the more select novelists of his age. He sprung from the noble family of the Lapini in Sienna, tracing its origin to Montalcino, a city of the Siennese territories, and he is variously mentioned under the names of Illicini, Ollicino, or Licinio. Very few particulars of his life have been handed down to us, such notices as we meet with in Ugurgieri being extremely scanty. It has been ascertained, however, that he was the son of Pietro Lapini, but we are ignorant of the precise period of his birth, as well as of his decease. Yet, on the authority of Poggiali, we learn that he most probably flourished towards the latter half of the fifteenth century, at which period he was regarded as one of the most learned philosophers of his day. Such, likewise, was his skill in the practice of medicine, that, influenced by his great reputation, Gio. Galeazzo, Duke of Milan, invited him to the office of his court physician, in which he continued for some time. Subsequently he entered into the service of Borso da Este, Duke of Ferrara, where he filled the first chair of medicine in that city with equal distinction and success. Intimate with the most distinguished scholars and men of science who adorned the same period, he also engaged in some of the most abstruse controversies of the times, in which he proved himself so redoubtable a disputant, that, worsted in argument, his enemies had more than once recourse to arms, from which he was only protected by the favour of the Duke. He seems, however, to have been most intimately acquainted with Ammannati Piccolomini, Cardinal of Pavia, who informs our author, in one of his letters from Constantinople, of the tremendous vow that had just been taken by the Grand Seignior to use his utmost exertions to exterminate Christianity from the world. Among his critical works may be enumerated his comment upon the "Triumphs" of Petrarch,

which he dedicated to his patron, Duke Borso. Of this, the most ancient edition is said by Poggiali to have been published in Vicenza, in fol., 1474, and afterwards along with the "Canzoniere" of Petrarch, accompanied with other commentaries The style, both of this and the other works of Illicini, partakes of the faults peculiar to his age; an age greatly inferior in character to the preceding one, when earlier writers piqued themselves upon the classic taste and simplicity of their language. Yet he did not so wholly devote himself, like many others, to the cultivation of the Latin tongue as to neglect the softer graces of Italian verse, in which he produced various poetical specimens much admired in their day. Some of these were published in Venice by Giorgio de' Rusconi, 8vo, 1508, together with those of Cesare Torto, Augustino da Urbino, and Niccolo Salimbeni of Sienna

Among the various editions of the novel here mentioned, Poggiali, to whom we are last of all indebted for its reappearance, enumerates only three, all of which are extremely rare Two of them formed part of the Borromeo collection, and are enumerated in the valuable catalogue of the Count's library; the one is without date, printed in 8vo, and the other bears that of Venice, 1515, also in 8vo, by Giorgio de' Rusconi. Yet no mention of the work appears in Haym's "Bibliotheca Italiana," any more than in other bibliographers, a circumstance that still further confirms the extreme rarity of these editions. The one first produced at Sienna, pronounced the most genuine by Poggiali, and which was revised and corrected by his hand with the most scrupulous care and judgment, has been adopted as the model of the following translation. Nor do we deem ourselves lightly indebted to Signor Poggiali, whose accuracy and diligence of research at once presented us with and improved the original production, by freeing it from those errors, both of orthography and language, with which all the earlier editions too much abounded. We cannot refrain, in conclusion, from presenting the reader with a beautiful sonnet, prefixed by the author to the argument of his work.

SONETTO.

O tu che leggerai l'opera mia
Studia ogni ingiuria voler perdonare,
Ed oltre a questo mai non indugiare
D'usar sempre a ciascuno cortesia

Anselmo Salimben ti fe la via,
E Carlo Montanin non sa restare
Di render cambio del bene operare,
Che dette ad altri Angelica in balia

Ogni animo gentil ben volontieri
Perdona, e rende sempre ben per male,
Ne mai consente a nullo stran pensieri

Se vuoi salire a le superne scale,
Pensa che Cristo pregò pe' Giudei,
Ed appo lui quanto 'l perdonar vale.

NOVELLA I.

UPON occasion of the celebration of the late splendid and happy nuptials, the tables were no sooner removed, than the fair guests, sensible of the chilliness of the season, drew their seats closer around the fire. There they continued to converse upon a variety of pleasing and appropriate topics, until they happened unanimously to agree in the following opinion that no qualities shine more conspicuously in a noble character than those of courtesy, gratitude, and generosity. These words were no sooner uttered, than a very pleasing and matronly-looking lady observed: "The very excellent sentiment, my dear ladies, that has just been advanced reminds me of some incidents which are known to have occurred between two young gentlemen belonging to this city, both of noble birth, like yourselves;—the one sprung from the powerful house of the Salimbeni, and the other from the splendid family of Montanini. The name of the former was Anselmo di Messer Salimbene, that of the latter, Carlo di Messer Tommaso; and as they will serve to illustrate, by their respective conduct and courtesies observed towards each other, the opinion we have just adopted, if you will consent to give me your thoughts upon the story, I will relate it just as it passed." Here the whole of her lovely audience gladly expressed their assent, uniting at the same time in the warmest thanks: upon which, with a highly gratified air, the good-natured lady proceeded:—It would seem as if some degree of imperfection were inherent in all created things, insomuch that it has become a general opinion that nothing short of the Creator Himself is perfect, as we clearly gather, indeed, from the many great and powerful families, governments, and empires, in all of which men are very far from being satisfied with their lot. And never, perhaps, was this more fully exemplified than in the said families of the Salimbeni and Montanini; for several members of both of them happening once to be present at a grand hunt, and a dispute arising as to the courage of their respective dogs in the destruction of a ferocious boar, after many angry words on both sides, one of the Montanini fiercely smote a gentleman of the Salimbeni party, who fell dead at his feet. Hence arose a long and deadly feud between the two families, during which that of the Montanini was reduced to the utmost peril and distress. After a considerable lapse of years, when their hatred had been somewhat subdued by time, it fell out that about the year 1395 the sole remaining representative of the Montanini family was Carlo di Messer Tommaso, who had a sister about fifteen years old, whose name was Angelica, for she truly appeared to possess more of the angel than the mortal in her face and form.

After all the losses of his family, Carlo was still in possession of a beautiful estate in Val di Strove, worth at least a thousand florins, and upon this he contrived, with some difficulty, to support his sister, and maintain some vestige of the decayed splendour of their ancestors. And while he thus continued to display the nobility of his birth rather by his manners and conversation than by any external show of pomp, Anselmo, the rival of his house, had extended his possessions, and

resided within a short distance of Carlo. In this way he first beheld the lovely Angelica, and finding the sweetness and elegance of her manners to surpass even the beauty of her person, he gradually and almost inadvertently became attached to her. Yet, on account of the enmity that had so long subsisted between the families, which, though it had ceased from acts of decided aggression, had never given place to renewed intercourse, he cautiously concealed his passion even from his most intimate friends. About this period, one of the most powerful citizens in the state becoming desirous of adding Carlo's little patrimony to his own domains, applied for the purchase of it, offering him the sum of a thousand ducats. But he refused to listen to the proposal, as well on account of its being the last remaining seat of his ancestors, as from its affording a subsistence for his sister: he himself having never been instructed in commerce or any branch of the mechanic arts. Irritated at this refusal, the disappointed citizen laid a plot against Carlo, in which, by the vilest intrigues, he succeeded in rendering him suspected by the Government, accusing him of a conspiracy, which led to his immediate arrest. And had it not been for the affected humanity of his betrayer, who, the better to succeed in his purpose, commuted his sentence for a thousand florins, he would instantaneously have suffered death. These were to be paid, however, within fifteen days; and the former sentence, in case of failure, was to be executed without further appeal. On finding himself reduced to such extreme necessity, and unable to provide the amount of the fine by any other means, Carlo sent word by one of the city brokers to the wily citizen that he was desirous of disposing of his property, even at a thousand florins, the sum for which he had been unjustly condemned. But, more avaricious than prudent, his relentless enemy, believing that he had him now in his power, would offer no more than seven hundred for what he formerly wished to give a thousand. When the commissioner brought back this answer, Carlo, incensed at his cupidity, and reflecting that it was all upon which his unhappy sister had to rely in the world, came to the noble resolution of dying innocently, and reserving what he could for her, rather than by reducing her to poverty endanger her honour and that of his house.

With this view, having sent his commissioner away, he quietly awaited the period of his doom, expecting little from his maternal relatives, who, though wealthy, were unwilling to move in an affair in which he had been pronounced guilty of a conspiracy against the state, and by which they might bring down suspicion upon themselves. The term fixed for his execution, therefore, being arrived, it happened that on the very morning he was to suffer, his more powerful neighbour and ancient rival, Anselmo, in going from his villa, passed near Carlo's house, whence he observed several women coming out, apparently in profound grief and lamentation. Upon making further inquiry, he was informed that the brother of one of the young ladies was that day condemned to suffer death, in consequence of his inability to pay a fine of a thousand florins, and the last of the fifteen days allowed him had just expired. Possessed at once of a noble and intelligent mind, Anselmo directly penetrated into Carlo's motives for

refusing to save his life out of regard to his sister's interest and safety, and learning exactly the circumstances in which he was placed, he retired to his own house in order to reflect upon the course he should pursue. Closing the door of his study, he proceeded to revolve the following reasons in his mind, observing to himself: "The time is at length come when Fortune is about to present a stronger temptation to my honour than even my own passions have ever done. Carlo Montanini, whose family has so long borne a mortal hatred to my house, is at last found guilty, even unto death, by our republic; and my revenge and that of my injured ancestors is at its climax. But more than this, happy Anselmo!" he continued, "awaits thee now. For since thou hast unwittingly made thyself a slave to the bright beauties of a poor girl, here an occasion offers for suing to her, at length, upon thine own terms; as her brother's head will no sooner be laid in the dust than she will become a dependent creature, and more easily inclined to listen to all thy wishes. Welcome Fortune, then, with a bold and joyous spirit; let her have her way, and let Carlo be numbered with the dead!" But suddenly checking himself, he cried: "Ah! wretch that I am! that such thoughts should find a place in my soul. Shame light upon me if I blush not to indulge them! Do I not well know that there are only two courses for kind and magnanimous spirits to pursue—the one, to revenge every injury, however slight or great, by one's own hand; the other, to show more magnanimity, by wholly despising and forgiving the author of it? The former of these I have already neglected to do, and the latter I am about to omit, though it is yet in my power. Have I not, moreover, seen, ungrateful as I am, how the sweet Angelica has forgiven all the calamities heaped upon her by our house, has always expressed the gentlest and noblest sentiments, and always shown me the forgiving kindness and manners of a suffering angel? No! shame to my noble birth were I capable of beholding such an one deserted and deprived of her dearest relative, a fond and only brother, when a few paltry florins would restore him again to her happy bosom. To know this, and to neglect it, would be to exhibit the meanness of the most avaricious of wretches, rather than the bearing of a gentleman. And what if her family once injured mine? Would it not still be better and nobler far to display the conduct of a reasonable being, not of an unrelenting and savage foe? Her brother never insulted me; it is enough that his ancestors paid the price of the wrong they wrought. If I may indeed boast myself of honourable birth and favoured by Fortune, I ought not to prove myself unworthy of both by forgetting those who are in want of the latter."

Upon uttering these last words, Anselmo had already adopted the virtuous resolution of assisting the unhappy Carlo, and snatching up the sum of a thousand gold ducats, he hastened with them to the chamberlain appointed to receive the fines of condemned prisoners. "Behold," he said, "a thousand gold ducats to pay the fine owing by Carlo Montanini; be quick, and give me a receipt, that he may be restored ere yet too late to his liberty!" And he even refused to take the difference between the ducats and the thousand florins, in order to

be more speedily furnished with a ticket from the chamberlain to procure Carlo's release. This being done, he mounted his horse and proceeded back to his own villa, while a domestic on whom he could rely hastened to deliver to the governor of the prison the receipt of the money paid, who, as soon as he received it, ordered Carlo to be brought into his presence. The latter, supposing it was the confessor who had arrived to prepare him for his final hour, inquired of the governor the reason of his summons. "I summon you, Carlo," said the other, "to witness the order for your release, which I hold here in my hand, the prison doors are no longer closed upon you, to go or stay remains wholly at your own pleasure" Overwhelmed with wonder and delight at these words, Carlo stood fixed to the spot like a statue "By whose means," he at length faintly uttered, "am I become free?" Pleading total ignorance of this, the governor could merely state that a servant had waited upon him with the receipt, but whose he could not tell. In equal ignorance, Carlo, leaving the prison, returned home, where, not arriving until towards midnight, he found the entrance closed; but hearing his sister's voice loud in lamentation, he exclaimed in a tone of affectionate surprise, "Let me come in, my dear Angelica; it is your brother Carlo who calls" Seized with the utmost surprise and joy, she flew to the door, and felt herself clasped in her brother's arms—a brother she had just been mourning for as dead. Several of her young friends, who had hastened to her in these unhappy moments, now participated in her joy, pointing out Carlo to their relations as he who had been lost, but was now found, the prisoner liberated from his doom At these tidings the house of Carlo was soon filled with friends and relatives, such as they had shown themselves, who part excusing and part congratulating one another, were nevertheless compelled to confess that to none of their efforts was Carlo indebted for relief. He could with difficulty refrain from an expression of contempt and surprise on hearing what he could so ill have believed, and thought it ages until he should be able to discover the author of his renewed existence.

Early the next morning, then, he proceeded to the chamberlain before mentioned, inquiring with as much indifference as he could assume if he happened to know the person who had advanced the thousand florins "Messer Carlo," replied the other, "I believe I can satisfy you Anselmo di Messer Salimbene it was who called and paid a thousand florins here for you yesterday, insisting on your immediate release Moreover, he would not even stop to receive the difference, observing that it was your wish to pay in full a thousand gold ducats; but if you now wish to receive the surplus, it is here at your service" "If this be so," replied Carlo, "the affair is all right; I am come for no kind of restitution;" and he took his leave.

"Is not this a little strange?" he observed, as he walked homewards: "what can be the object of it? I must think of this." Then recalling Anselmo's manner towards his sister when they had happened to meet, it struck him that there was something peculiar in it, though he had never thought of it before; and again recurring to their long and fatal enmity, he could discover nothing by which he

himself could have given occasion for so very unexpected and generous a return. Gifted as he was with equal penetration and discretion, he then concluded that nothing less than a devoted passion for his sister could account for such an instance of liberality on Anselmo's part; and the more so, as he knew that in noble and well-governed minds such a passion is kept more under the control of prudence, grace, and courtesy, displaying its strength only in the noblest acts. Feeling assured, therefore, that Anselmo had restored him to life for the sake of Angelica, he felt, also, that both his own and that of Angelica ought to remain at the future disposal of their benefactor, who, though their ancient foe, had watched over them like a guardian angel when the world and their friends had deserted them. Under the impression of these feelings, he longed for an interview with Anselmo at Sienna before communicating his sentiments to any other person except his own sister.

As soon, therefore, as he knew their benefactor had returned to the city, he went to his sister Angelica, and taking her aside, thus addressed her: "I am sure I need not repeat to you, dear Angelica, how deeply I have been afflicted whenever I recalled to mind the lost fortunes of our house, our own sufferings, and the difficulties with which we have so long had to contend. Still, it would be a far heavier grief for me to think that we had in any way degenerated in spirit from the honour of our family—a family that was never accused of yielding to any other, however rich and powerful, in point of courtesy and a generous return of such favours as it might have received. But Fortune having at length deprived us of this power, while one of the greatest of obligations has just been conferred upon us, we may truly consider our situation as one of the most trying and unhappy, whatever path we choose to pursue. For without the sudden interposition of our benefactor I must instantly have perished, and your own safety and honour been exposed to the most imminent risk. This benefactor, whose courtesy and generosity rescued us from destruction, is no other than Anselmo di Messer Salimbene, who, regardless of the ancient enmity and wrongs heaped upon him by our house, even to the murder of one of his ancestors, has paid a thousand ducats and restored me to life and liberty, solely out of affection for you. But, alas! in what manner can we make an adequate return for such an obligation? What is left for us, if we do not wish to exhibit to the world one of the most glaring instances of ingratitude, and to crouch before our benefactor with the feeling of a dependant and of a slave—what is left for us, but to throw ourselves upon his mercy, to place you in his power, and, leaving you at his disposal (as I doubt not his honour and humanity), thus grant him an ample return for all the benefits conferred upon us? I am convinced he loves you, and you will every day become more dear to him if you show yourself capable of making the greatest sacrifices for him, of relying fully and devotedly upon his heart and honour. When we reflect, morever, that he might have permitted me to perish in order to render you an easier victim to his arts, and that, scorning the prospect of thus obtaining you, he restored me to your arms, I shall feel ashamed to appear in his presence, and I

will fly for ever from my native place, even from Italy, if you consent not to my proposal. I would prefer death to the continual sense of such an obligation, and from the enemy of our father's house! What! would I remain here to be pointed at as 'that Carlo Montanini, the first of his family who ever owed his life or the smallest obligation to one of the Salimbeni, who has now not only saved his life but paid for him a thousand gold florins without a chance of obtaining them again?' And it is indeed impossible for us to restore them; we are barely enabled to support ourselves, and you must be aware that we shall be considered by him as the most ungrateful of wretches if you do not permit me to reward him with yourself." Here Carlo ceased, while, her face covered with tears and blushes, stood the trembling Angelica, equally terrified at the idea of losing him, and of sanctioning the passion of one whom she had hardly yet learned to love "Ah, brother!" she cried, "how little did I imagine when I clasped you in my arms after believing you dead that Fortune could still thus cruelly persecute us! Wretch that I am, to have lived to hear all you have said; far, far more bitter than all the injuries borne by our ancestors. So young, so very young too as I am, you know I could never bear to lose you, that I have never had any will but yours. Then pity me, and do not take advantage of the cruel situation in which I am placed, my dear and only brother, the last support and solace I have left. Yet I will do everything, yes, everything in the world you can ask of me, but make myself so very wretched, so worthless in my own eyes, and without knowing that I can even love the object of your choice. Oh, better at once to die than live in such perpetual fear and torment, as I am sure I should do by becoming the companion of one whom I have not yet learned to esteem. Yes, would that I had died when my poor mother died, closing at my birth these eyes that have shed so little light of pleasure upon others, but so many silent and bitter tears. Indeed, when I think of all we have suffered, it signifies little what becomes of me; and after all your kindness, rather than bear the loss of you, if you could really have the heart to desert me, I will go whithersoever, I will become whatsoever, best pleases you. Yet, when you shall have made me the property of another, my life will afterwards be at my own disposal, and I would most willingly sacrifice it to discharge the obligations you owe, while I observe what is due to my own honour." Here relapsing into a flood of tears mingled with stifled sighs and sobs, the unhappy girl ceased; when her brother, little less affected than herself, strove to give her comfort in the following words: "My best and sweetest Angelica, wherefore do you afflict yourself thus? Had I been one of the harshest and most unkind of brothers, instead of preferring, as I did, rather to lay down my life than expose your safety and honour by leaving you dependent upon a pitiless world, you could hardly complain more bitterly than you do And what have we to dread when we recall to mind the delicacy and nobleness of feeling that has hitherto marked the whole conduct of Anselmo towards us both, when he did not even let us know the singular kindness and obligation he so lately conferred upon us? It is an appeal to our gratitude that we cannot and ought not to disre-

gard; and in what other manner can we notice or return it but by an equal appeal to his honour, by placing unlimited confidence in him who scorned to take advantage of our situation, though under the strongest temptation, but, by restoring an only brother to his sister, deprived himself of the power and opportunity of indulging his passion for her? From such a passion I trust there is little to dread; and, by the spirit of our ancestors, I will never consent to be outshone in an act of courtesy and liberality, and by a Salimbeni, though both our lives and honour were to be the forfeit! Then dry up your tears, my noble-hearted sister, and believe that an enemy capable of so disinterested an act of kindness towards us will never give us cause to repent, or abuse, by making you unhappy, the trust we are about to place in him. At all events, my best Angelica, if you love me, consent to accompany me this evening to his house, and let us convince him that, though we cannot submit to such excessive obligations, we can act as kindly and generously as himself."

About nightfall, therefore, he proceeded with his sister towards Anselmo's villa, and inquiring of the porter, on his arrival at the gate, whether his master was at home, they were immediately admitted. But what was Anselmo's astonishment upon entering the room to behold Carlo and his beautiful sister! He was unable to utter a word, until her brother, taking him aside, begged to speak to him in another apartment. Signifying his assent to this, Anselmo conducted him through a noble suite of rooms, and dismissing his servant, requested, with some degree of embarrassment, to know his pleasure. "Noble sir," replied Carlo, "I believe I am debtor for this poor life of mine to your mercy and compassion, no less than my dear sister, who owes everything she possesses to the same generous hand. Were our family what it once was, we should have rejoiced to return the obligations you have conferred upon us as we ought; but as we are possessed of little beyond our daily subsistence, we are so unfortunate as to have nothing to offer you in return beyond our poor selves. By restoring the forfeited life which we were unable to purchase, you have truly rendered us your property, and it is in your power to dispose of us as you please. Whatever our misfortunes may have been, we would not willingly add ingratitude to the account: there yet burns within us some spark of our ancestral spirit, ambitious of discharging the debt we owe with our best services and with our lives. Do not scruple, therefore, as we are your slaves, to make use of us for your profit or your pleasure as you deem fit."

Upon concluding these words, without awaiting a reply, Carlo left the room and hastened home. What were Anselmo's emotions of surprise and joy to behold him depart alone! Doubting whether he could believe his senses, he was almost overwhelmed with the conflict of his feelings when he beheld her seated in the saloon where he had left her—her whom he had so long and passionately loved. Surely she must have consented, he thought, to accompany her brother, and was no longer insensible to his passion. Yet deep grief and wretchedness seemed depicted in her beautiful countenance, and made a holy appeal to the heart. He gazed upon her with the most intense interest

and emotion, unable to utter a word, continuing long absorbed in these feelings, as if awed into silence by the charm of her sudden appearance and by the exquisite grace and loveliness of her person. In this manner they sat, Anselmo still gazing upon her with a variety of contending feelings, for some length of time, without either uttering a syllable, while Angelica betrayed her confusion and distress by attempting to stifle the sobs that escaped from her, hiding her face in her hands. Unwilling to behold this, Anselmo, having adopted his resolution, left the room; and in a few minutes Angelica found herself surrounded by some of his female relatives; while he sent off his servants in various directions to summon several of his most particular friends, acquainting them, at the same time, that he had a matter of the utmost importance to consult them upon.

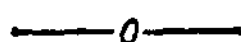
In the course of an hour, a pretty numerous party being assembled, Anselmo requested them to give him the honour of their company to a friend's house, and sending the same request to Angelica and the ladies, he led them towards the mansion of Carlo Montanini How much was Angelica surprised, on their arrival, to hear Anselmo inquire for her brother, who shortly afterwards made his appearance at the gate, saying, "Signor, what are your commands?" "Carlo," replied the other, "you called upon me, not very long ago, begging to speak with me in private and I now return your call, desirous of conversing with you before all this honourable company." "Signor," said Carlo, "I am prepared to obey you in everything;" and then inviting the whole party in, he led the way to his principal hall, where, all being seated, Anselmo addressed them in the following noble manner: "My very kind and dear friends, sweet ladies, and noble citizens, I doubt not you are all intent upon the meaning of this visit, and not a little curious to hear my motives for so unusual a proceeding, almost unprecedented on the part of ourselves or our ancestors But the importance of the occasion required it; and I wished to convince as many of my friends as possible that it is not always in the power of Fortune to tarnish the splendour of sterling merit and true nobility of mind; that, superior to riches, power, and pomp, these are qualities that may still shine conspicuously forth; while, without them, what, alas! are nobility, glory, and pride of birth? The truth of this has, I am happy to say, even now been beautifully displayed in the conduct of Carlo and Angelica Montanini, whose surpassing grace and courtesy of manners, whose libreality and gratitude, under the most trying circumstances, have triumphed over their adverse lot, and fully shown the nobility of their minds to be equal to that of their descent. Pity it is that mine ancestors should so long have borne enmity against spirits of such a stamp; should have despoiled them of their native honours and possessions, and exposed them to the injuries of Fortune and to the machinations of designing men. Had a Carlo and Angelica sooner appeared, much family discord and unhappiness might have been prevented As it is, you must now learn how long and ardently I have cherished an affection for the sister of Carlo, the beautiful Angelica, whom you have so kindly accompanied hither. Her worth, her gentleness, and accomplishments, all her virtues and noble qualities,

are too well appreciated and beloved to create the least surprise when I declare myself one of her earliest and most devoted admirers. Yet it was only the sagacious mind of Carlo that penetrated my secret, long concealed even from the object of my regard, and it is hardly worth while to repeat the recent circumstances that brought it to light. Enough to say that Carlo imagined he owed everything he possessed, even his life, to my influence, and that, acting under this impression, as he had already concluded upon sacrificing himself for his dear sister's sake, so in the height of his gratitude and noble-minded courtesy, he believed they ought both to sacrifice themselves for mine. Noble instance of generosity! Because I had restored so noble a spirit, an only brother (a common duty) to his sister's bosom, he, knowing I must be passionately attached to her, surrendered both her and his own services into my hands, willing rather to become my victims than to live free under the sense of unrequited favours, though unknown to any but themselves. Thus it was not the world they feared, they risked together their peace of mind and their reputation, but they feared only the silent reproaches of their benefactor. For they knew I was ambitious of making Angelica mine, beyond the dearest object I ever pursued, but the moment she was placed in my power, I restored her, without even addressing to her a single word, to the arms of her brother, as you have seen; and I am now here to entreat of him and of all of you to use your best influence with that lady that she will some time, should I be esteemed worthy, permit me to call her by the honoured name of wife" Carlo here expressing an entire obedience to his wishes, and the whole party uniting with him in pressing his sister to accept Anselmo's hand, the ladies drew her forward, while her lover, taking out three rich diamond rings, approached, and placed one of them upon her finger, espoused her in the presence of them all. Then turning to the spectators, he continued. "Methinks it would ill beseem the splendour of my Angelica's beauty, of her virtues and her rank, to receive her dowerless into the family of the Salimbeni, the ancient foe of her house, but now, I trust, for ever united with it in bonds of lasting amity and love. Be witness, therefore, for me, my gentle and courteous friends, that I here endow her with one-fourth of the whole of my possessions, apportioning, likewise, the same share to my dear and only brother, Carlo, for his sole benefit and use"

As he concluded these words, loud murmurs of applause and heart-felt approbation ran through the assembly, each vieing with the rest in congratulations to the happy parties, whose disinterested virtues and generosity merited so rich a return. The marriage-contract having been drawn out and signed, Anselmo, accompanied by the same honourable train of friends, reconducted his lovely bride into the mansion of his ancestors, where, after partaking of a rich repast, he dismissed them with many thanks, though not without giving them a fresh invitation to meet again on the following Sunday at his ancestral villa

Novels of Alessandro Sozzini.

ALESSANDRO SOZZINI.



ALESSANDRO GIROLAMO SOZZINI [1] is perhaps one of the least known among the Italian writers of fiction, and is certainly not to be placed in competition with some of the most distinguished either of his own or a preceding age. He will, nevertheless, afford us one or two specimens, remarkable rather for their lightness and variety than for any great degree of interest or novelty attaching to the subject. His stories for the most part, indeed, are rather selected than original, many of them consisting of jests and anecdotes, along with all the good points he could meet with both in preceding and contemporary authors, from whom, like many others, he pirated with very little ceremony: good stories appearing to have been the common property of all. His collection, which was first published at Sienna, without date, in 8vo, but some time, as we learn from Poggiali, towards the close of the sixteenth century, is now very rarely to be met with.

Although by no means possessing the genuine characteristics of the Italian novel, such a production may, perhaps, be entitled to rank in the numerous list of those that are known to furnish a few occasional good tales and hints to other writers, amidst an abundance of very inferior and very exceptional matter. In its native garb, the work is chiefly worth attention on account of the ease and simplicity of its style, and the somewhat naive and artless manner with which, in addition to the liveliness of the subject, the anecdotes are introduced. We are informed, upon the authority of Poggiali, that besides his "Raccolta di Burle," &c., Sozzini likewise produced a Pastoral, in five long acts, and in *terza rima;* and it is stated by the above author to have been included in his own collection, with the following title.—"Bisquilla egloga pastorale di Maggio del Signor Alessandro Sozzini," &c., 1588, 8vo.

More ample notices relating to the life and works of this writer are said to have perished in one of those terrific earthquakes that last afflicted, with other and much more serious loss to all ranks of inhabitants, the city of Sienna. His name has frequently been confounded with that of two other authors, both bearing the name, also, of Alessandro, mentioned by Ugurgieri, who, on the other hand, takes no kind of notice of the novelist.

[1] The work from which we have contrived to select the few novels that follow is entitled "Raccolta di burle, facezie, motti, e buffonerie di tre uomini Senesi, cioè di Salvadore di Topo Scarpellino, di Jacomo alias Scacazzone, e di Marianotto Securini, fattore dell' opera del duomo di Siena. poste insieme da Alessandro di Girolamo Sozzini, gentiluomo Senese, per passar tempo e per fuggire l'ozio." 8vo, without date. Sienna.

he could?" "But do not I tell you," said the friar, getting into a passion, "that he meant five years—yes, five, you rascal, since you were last confessed?" "No, no," said the unhappy rustic; "but if you will not pay me the money, at least let me have my capons back." "But I have not got them," said the friar; "I wish I had: how can I give you back what I have never taken?" "Ah! this is very fine," said the other, quite in a passion, "the man bought them for you, and he carried them just now into your cell,—what say you to that?" "I say," returned the priest, "let us go and look for them; there will be one apiece; but if they be in my cell, I will eat them both without sauce, and pay thee thy price into the bargain; nay, I will give thee ten livres. Here are the keys. come and search! Do you think the rogue got through the keyhole," he continued, addressing the wretched rustic, as he opened the door, "without me and my lock and key? There now, look till you are tired; you see every place is open; and if you find them, call me a greater thief than the thief himself."

The countryman bustled, and searched, and swore, but all to no purpose; no capons were there. So he at last said to the friar, "But surely you will tell me who the man is who cheated me." "I know him not," answered the good father, "any more than I know you. I never saw either of you in my life before, and, in my opinion, you are a couple of arrant rogues." And with this compliment, the poor countryman was obliged to take his leave.

NOVELLA II.

SCACAZZONE returning one day from Rome, found himself, when within a short distance of Sienna, without cash enough to purchase a dinner. But resolving not to go without one if he could avoid it, he very quietly walked into the nearest inn, and appearing quite a stranger, he demanded a room in which to dine alone. He next ordered whatever he considered most likely to prove agreeable to himself, without in the least sparing his purse, as the good host believed, and ate and drank everything of the best. When he had at length finished his wine, and refreshed himself with a short nap for his journey, he rang the bell, and with a very unconcerned air asked the waiter for his bill. This being handed to him, "Waiter," he cried, "can you tell me anything relating to the laws of this place?" "Oh yes, signor, I dare say;" for a waiter is never at a loss. "For instance," continued Scacazzone, "what does a man forfeit by killing another?" "His life, signor, certainly," said the waiter. "But, if he only wounds another badly, not mortally, what then?" "Then," returned the waiter, "as it may happen, according to the nature of the provocation and the injury." "And lastly," continued the guest, "if you only deal a fellow a sound box upon the ear, what do you pay for that?" "For that," echoed the waiter, "it is here about ten livres, signor; no more." "Then send your master to me," cried Scacazzone; "be quick, begone!" Upon the good host's appearance, his wily guest conducted

himself in such a manner, uttering such accusations against extortion, such threats, and such vile aspersions upon his host's house, that on Scacazzone purposely bringing their heads pretty close in contact, the landlord, unable longer to bear his taunts, lent him rather a severe cuff. "I am truly obliged to you," cried the happy Scacazzone, taking him by the hand, "this is all I wanted with you; truly obliged to you, my good host, and will thank you for the change. Your bill here is eight livres, and the fine upon your assault is ten; however, if you will have the goodness to pay the difference to the waiter, as I find I shall reach the city very pleasantly before evening, it will be quite right."

NOVELLA III.

ANOTHER time, our identical friend Scacazzone happening to pass by the Church of our Lady of the Well, went in to pay his devotions to the patron saint of thieves There were only three blind men in the place, apparently employed in the same manner; but hearing some one stirring, they began to ask alms, which the said Scacazzone bestowed equally upon all three, in the following manner. "I have made a vow, brothers," he said, "to bestow a whole gold ducat in charity, and I cannot do better than give it, my poor fellows, to you Here it is, take it;" while each of them stretched out their hands, and he gave it to none. He next said: "If you will follow my advice now, you will all go to the nearest tavern, after finishing prayer, and try to make yourselves merry for once in your lives." Delighted at these words, and each supposing the other in possession of the gold, they declared themselves ready to follow his advice, and hastened as fast as they could find their way to the hostelry of Marchino in Diacceto, their arch-enemy following at a convenient distance to enjoy the result. Proceeding, therefore, boldly into the house, the blind guests began to give themselves no slight airs, requiring to be served with everything of the best, while Scacazzone took his station at the threshold. They were no sooner seated than they began to discuss the dishes with very little ceremony, sending many of them away, and calling for better fare, as truly the good host appeared to have an idea of entertaining them somewhat scantily, according to the cut of their cloth; their arch-impostor having given him a sort of hint not to exceed the bounds of prudence in point of supply. But he was so uncommonly attentive and polite, and made them so many fine promises on condition of their consenting to make his house the scene of entertainment on other occasions, and was besides so very moderate in his demands (for the poor fellows could not see what they had been eating, and began to suspect all was not as it should be), that they were compelled to make the best of their bargain. Still, they were so little pleased, that they would make no rash promises to come again, and as they called for their bill, their ideas rambled to future scenes of festivity at some of their more ancients haunts. "Give him the ducat and let us

go," said one, "with the change to some better quarters." "No," said another, "do you give it him; I have not got it;" and so answered the third. "But one of you must have it," exclaimed the first. "I tell you I heard him give it to you." "Nay, to you," retorted the others; "you were standing nearer to the gate." "Very true, sirs; but you were nearer to him who gave it; and you have got it between you, and shall pay." "Villain!" cried one of the others, "do you tax us with theft? Had he given it to us, do you think you would not have known which?" "I know you are two rogues," rejoined the last, "and want to divide the ducat between you; yes, you want to cheat a poor, honest, blind man. But do you suppose I will not have my share?" and raising his cudgel as he spoke, he dealt his blows soundly on all sides of him.

Feeling the weight of his hand, his blind brothers were not long in following his example, and all the three began to hazard in every direction most serious and ferocious blows. Their want of eyes rendered the encounter by no means less dangerous; and one of the two friends had already disabled his ally by fracturing his arm, and was engaged with his enemy alone. "One of the rogues has killed me, I fear," cried the wounded man, as he attempted to draw from the field and fell upon the ground "I only wish they would despatch each other," he continued, as he heard them fiercely cuffing and grappling with one another; "I wish they would, and I should find the ducat in the pocket of one of them"

The author of this wicked trick in the meanwhile was enjoying the engagement at the door; and beginning to think the affair somewhat too serious, the populace already collecting in the street, he stepped in, with the help of the host, and carried off the wounded blind from the scene of action. Then separating the others with difficulty, he began to make inquiries into the merits of the case, and concluded with observing, "I daresay the gentleman gave the money to none of you: so come, here are three farthings, and I will pay your bill for you; and so be reconciled."

Niccolo Machiavelli.

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI[1]

THE name of the Florentine secretary, in his character of a statesman and historian, is too generally known to require further illustration in a work like the present Distinguished for his political life and labours, the confidential minister and adviser of princes, and employed in many important embassies, it appears somewhat singular that we should be enabled to rank him also in the list of Italian novelists. Such, however, seems to have been the universality of his genius as to lead him to prosecute the most opposite pursuits with comparative ease and success Thus, in addition to his eight books of Florentine history, from the year 1215 to 1492, his "Life of Castruccio Castricani," his "Treatises upon Livy," and his "Principe," he produced several comedies and poems, most of which, if not very correct, are at least distinguished for their wit and spirit. His comedies are "La Mandragola" and "La Clitia;" and others, most probably, as well as more specimens of his novels, have existed, but never been handed down to us His single novel of "Belphagor" is all, then, we have here to present to the lover of Italian fiction, though it is considered by native writers as ample evidence, from the elegant manner in which it is treated, of the author's happy genius for this species of composition As he flourished during a great part of the age of the Medici, he may be considered, also, as belonging to the writers of that golden period, among whom he affords us this solitary specimen It has thus been cited in the "Testi di Lingua," where we find mention of what is esteemed the best edition, in 1550, generally called "Edizione Testina" This edition is alluded to as the most correct and genuine impression by Poggiali, who collated it with that published in the large edition of all this author's works that appeared in the year 1782 at Florence.

In regard to the whimsical subject of the story, the merit of invention would appear to belong neither to Machiavelli nor any of his contemporaries, though it was long disputed which was the first to avail himself of it. On this point, perhaps, we cannot do better than refer to the authority of Mr Dunlop, whose observations will be found in a subsequent page[2] "The notion of this story," Mr Dunlop further remarks, "is ingenious, and might have been made productive of entertaining incident, had Belphagor been led by his connubial connection from one crime to another. But Belphagor is only unfortunate, and in no respect guilty, nor did anything occur during his abode

[1] Born at Florence about the year 1469; died in 1527 His novel of "Belphagor" was not published until 1549, twenty-two years after the author's death.

[2] *Vide* post, p 254

on earth that testified the power of woman in leading us to final condemnation The story of the peasant and the possession of the princesses bears no reference to the original idea with which the tale commences, and has no connection with the object of the infernal deputy's terrestrial sojourn."[1]

On this we might remark, that part of the humour of the story seems to consist in Belphagor's earthly career being cut short before he had served the full term of his apprenticeship. But from the follies and extravagancies into which he had already plunged, we are authorised to believe that, even if he had been able longer to support the asperities of the lady's temper, he must, from the course he was pursuing, have been led from crime to crime, or at least from folly to folly, to such a degree that he would infallibly have been condemned.

BELPHAGOR.[2]

NOVELLA PIACEVOLISSIMA.

WE read in the ancient archives of Florence the following account, as it was received from the lips of a very holy man, greatly respected by every one for the sanctity of his manners at the period in which he lived. Happening once to be deeply absorbed in his prayers, such was their efficacy, that he saw an infinite number of condemned souls, belonging to those miserable mortals who had died in their sins, undergoing the punishment due to their offences in the regions below. He remarked that the greater part of them lamented nothing so bitterly as their folly in having taken wives, attributing to them the whole of their misfortunes. Much surprised at this, Minos and Rhadamanthus, with the rest of the infernal judges, unwilling to credit all the abuse heaped upon the female sex, and wearied from day to day with its repetition, agreed to bring the matter before Pluto It was then resolved that the conclave of infernal princes should form a committee of inquiry, and should adopt such measures as might be deemed most advisable by the court in order to discover the truth or falsehood of the calumnies which they heard. All being assembled in council, Pluto addressed them as follows "Dearly beloved demons! though by celestial dispensation and the irreversible decree of fate this kingdom fell to my share, and I might strictly dispense with any kind of celestial or earthly responsibility, yet, as it is more prudent and respectful to consult the laws and to hear the opinion of others, I have resolved to be guided by your advice, particularly in a case that may chance to cast some imputation upon our government. For

[1] History of Fiction, vol ii pp 411, 414, 415

[2] This novel would appear to have been a favourite subject of imitation, no less with the Italians than with the writers of other countries "It has suggested," observes Mr Dunlop, "the plot of an old English comedy, called 'Grim, the Collier of Croydon,' printed 1602, and also 'Belphegor, or, the Marriage of the Devil,' 1691" Among the novelists of Italy it is disputed property, having been treated by a variety of hands.

the souls of all men daily arriving in our kingdom still continue to lay the whole blame upon their wives, and as this appears to us impossible, we must be careful how we decide in such a business, lest we also should come in for a share of their abuse, on account of our too great severity; and yet judgment must be pronounced, lest we be taxed with negligence and with indifference to the interests of justice. Now, as the latter is the fault of a careless, and the former of an unjust judge, we, wishing to avoid the trouble and the blame that might attach to both, yet hardly seeing how to get clear of it, naturally enough apply to you for assistance, in order that you may look to it, and contrive in some way that, as we have hitherto reigned without the slightest imputation upon our character, we may continue to do so for the future."

The affair appearing to be of the utmost importance to all the princes present, they first resolved that it was necessary to ascertain the truth, though they differed as to the best means of accomplishing this object. Some were of opinion that they ought to choose one or more from among themselves, who should be commissioned to pay a visit to the world, and in a human shape endeavour personally to ascertain how far such reports were grounded in truth. To many others it appeared that this might be done without so much trouble merely by compelling some of the wretched souls to confess the truth by the application of a variety of tortures. But the majority being in favour of a journey to the world, they abided by the former proposal. No one, however, being ambitious of undertaking such a task, it was resolved to leave the affair to chance. The lot fell upon the arch-devil Belphagor, who, previous to the Fall, had enjoyed the rank of archangel in a higher world. Though he received his commission with a very ill grace, he nevertheless felt himself constrained by Pluto's imperial mandate, and prepared to execute whatever had been determined upon in council. At the same time he took an oath to observe the tenor of his instructions, as they had been drawn up with all due solemnity and ceremony for the purpose of his mission. These were to the following effect:—*Imprimis*, that the better to promote the object in view, he should be furnished with a hundred thousand gold ducats; secondly, that he should make use of the utmost expedition in getting into the world; thirdly, that after assuming the human form he should enter into the marriage state; and lastly, that he should live with his wife for the space of ten years. At the expiration of this period, he was to feign death and return home, in order to acquaint his employers, by the fruits of experience, what really were the respective conveniences and inconveniences of matrimony. The conditions further ran, that during the said ten years he should be subject to all kinds of miseries and disasters, like the rest of mankind, such as poverty, prisons, and diseases into which men are apt to fall, unless, indeed, he could contrive by his own skill and ingenuity to avoid them. Poor Belphagor having signed these conditions and received the money, forthwith came into the world, and having set up his equipage, with a numerous train of servants, he made a very splendid entrance into Florence. He selected this city in preference to all others, as being most favour-

at Florence. In such objects the greatest part of his fortune was soon consumed. At length the Carnival season was at hand; the festival of St John was to be celebrated, and the whole city, as usual, was in a ferment. Numbers of the noblest families were about to vie with each other in the splendour of their parties, and the Lady Onesta, being resolved not to be outshone by her acquaintance, insisted that Roderigo should exceed them all in the richness of their feasts. For the reasons above stated, he submitted to her will; nor, indeed, would he have scrupled at doing much more, however difficult it might have been, could he have flattered himself with a hope of preserving the peace and comfort of his household, and of awaiting quietly the consummation of his ruin. But this was not the case, inasmuch as the arrogant temper of his wife had grown to such a height of asperity by long indulgence, that he was at a loss in what way to act. His domestics, male and female, would no longer remain in the house, being unable to support for any length of time the intolerable life they led. The inconvenience which he suffered in consequence of having no one to whom he could intrust his affairs it is impossible to express. Even his own familiar devils, whom he had brought along with him, had already deserted him, choosing to return below rather than longer submit to the tyranny of his wife. Left, then, to himself, amidst this turbulent and unhappy life, and having dissipated all the ready money he possessed, he was compelled to live upon the hopes of the returns expected from his ventures in the East and the West. Being still in good credit, in order to support his rank he resorted to bills of exchange; nor was it long before, accounts running against him, he found himself in the same situation as many other unhappy speculators in that market. Just as his case became extremely delicate, there arrived sudden tidings both from East and West that one of his wife's brothers had dissipated the whole of Roderigo's profits in play, and that while the other was returning with a rich cargo uninsured, his ship had the misfortune to be wrecked, and he himself was lost. No sooner did this affair transpire than his creditors assembled, and supposing it it must be all over with him, though their bills had not yet become due, they resolved to keep a strict watch over him in fear that he might abscond. Roderigo, on his part, thinking that there was no other remedy, and feeling how deeply he was bound by the Stygian law, determined at all hazards to make his escape. So taking horse one morning early, as he luckily lived near the Prato gate, in that direction he went off. His departure was soon known; the creditors were all in a bustle, the magistrates were applied to, and the officers of justice, along with a great part of the populace, were despatched in pursuit. Roderigo had hardly proceeded a mile before he heard this hue and cry, and the pursuers were soon so close at his heels that the only resource he had left was to abandon the highroad and take to the open country, with the hope of concealing himself in the fields. But finding himself unable to make way over the hedges and ditches, he left his horse and took to his heels, traversing fields of vines and canes, until he reached Peretola, where he entered the house of Matteo del Bricca, a labourer of Giovanna del Bene. Finding him at home.

a number of masses to be said, after which he proceeded with some unmeaning ceremonies calculated to give solemnity to his task. Then approaching the young lady, he whispered in her ear: "Roderigo, it is Matteo that is come. So do as we agreed upon, and get out." Roderigo replied: "It is all well; but you have not asked enough to make you a rich man. So when I depart I will take possession of the daughter of Charles, king of Naples, and I will not leave her till you come. You may then demand whatever you please for your reward; and mind that you never trouble me again." And when he had said this, he went out of the lady, to the no small delight and amazement of the whole city of Florence.

It was not long again before the accident that had happened to the daughter of the king of Naples began to be buzzed about the country, and all the monkish remedies having been found to fail, the king, hearing of Matteo, sent for him from Florence. On arriving at Naples, Matteo, after a few ceremonies, performed the cure. Before leaving the princess, however, Roderigo said: "You see, Matteo, I have kept my promise and made a rich man of you, and I owe you nothing now. So, henceforward you will take care to keep out of my way, lest as I have hitherto done you some good, just the contrary should happen to you in future." Upon this Matteo thought it best to return to Florence, after receiving fifty thousand ducats from his majesty, in order to enjoy his riches in peace, and never once imagined that Roderigo would come in his way again. But in this he was deceived; for he soon heard that a daughter of Louis, king of France, was possessed by an evil spirit, which disturbed our friend Matteo not a little, thinking of his majesty's great authority and of what Roderigo had said. Hearing of Matteo's great skill, and finding no other remedy, the king despatched a messenger for him, whom Matteo contrived to send back with a variety of excuses. But this did not long avail him; the king applied to the Florentine council, and our hero was compelled to attend. Arriving with no very pleasant sensations at Paris, he was introduced into the royal presence, when he assured his majesty that though it was true he had acquired some fame in the course of his demoniac practice, he could by no means always boast of success, and that some devils were of such a desperate character as not to pay the least attention to threats, enchantments, or even the exorcisms of religion itself. He would, nevertheless, do his majesty's pleasure, entreating at the same time to be held excused if it should happen to prove an obstinate case. To this the king made answer, that be the case what it might, he would certainly hang him if he did not succeed. It is impossible to describe poor Matteo's terror and perplexity on hearing these words; but at length mustering courage, he ordered the possessed princess to be brought into his presence. Approaching as usual close to her ear, he conjured Roderigo in the most humble terms, by all he had ever done for him, not to abandon him in such a dilemma, but to show some sense of gratitude for past services and to leave the princess. "Ah! thou traitorous villain!" cried Roderigo, "hast thou, indeed, ventured to meddle in this business? Dost thou boast thyself a rich man at my expense? I will

now convince the world and thee of the extent of my power, both to give and to take away. I shall have the pleasure of seeing thee hanged before thou leavest this place." Poor Matteo finding there was no remedy, said nothing more, but, like a wise man, set his head to work in order to discover some other means of expelling the spirit; for which purpose he said to the king, "Sire, it is as I feared: there are certain spirits of so malignant a character that there is no keeping any terms with them, and this is one of them. However, I will make a last attempt, and I trust that it will succeed according to our wishes. If not, I am in your majesty's power, and I hope you will take compassion on my innocence. In the first place, I have to entreat that your majesty will order a large stage to be erected in the centre of the great square, such as will admit the nobility and clergy of the whole city. The stage ought to be adorned with all kinds of silks and with cloth of gold, and with an altar raised in the middle. To-morrow morning I would have your majesty, with your full train of lords and ecclesiastics in attendance, seated in order and in magnificent array, as spectators of the scene at the said place. There, after having celebrated solemn mass, the possessed princess must appear; but I have in particular to entreat that on one side of the square may be stationed a band of men with drums, trumpets, horns, tambours, bagpipes, cymbals, and kettle-drums, and all other kinds of instruments that make the most infernal noise. Now, when I take my hat off, let the whole band strike up, and approach with the most horrid uproar towards the stage. This, along with a few other secret remedies which I shall apply, will surely compel the spirit to depart."

These preparations were accordingly made by the royal command, and when the day, being Sunday morning, arrived, the stage was seen crowded with people of rank and the square with the people. Mass was celebrated, and the possessed princess conducted between two bishops, with a train of nobles, to the spot. Now, when Rodeigo beheld so vast a concourse of people, together with all this awful preparation, he was almost struck dumb with astonishment, and said to himself, "I wonder what that cowardly wretch is thinking of doing now? Does he imagine I have never seen finer things than these in the regions above—ay! and more horrid things below? However, I will soon make him repent it, at all events." Matteo then approaching him, besought him to come out; but Roderigo replied, "Oh, you think you have done a fine thing now! What do you mean to do with all this trumpery? Can you escape my power, think you, in this way, or elude the vengeance of the king? Thou poltroon villain, I will have thee hanged for this!" And as Matteo continued the more to entreat him, his adversary still vilified him in the same strain. So Matteo, believing there was no time to be lost, made the sign with his hat, when all the musicians who had been stationed there for the purpose suddenly struck up a hideous din, and ringing a thousand peals, approached the spot. Roderigo pricked up his ears at the sound, quite at a loss what to think, and rather in a perturbed tone of voice he asked Matteo what it meant. To this the latter returned, appa-

rently much alarmed: "Alas! dear Roderigo, it is your wife, she is coming for you!" It is impossible to give an idea of the anguish of Roderigo's mind and the strange alteration which his feelings underwent at that name. The moment the name of "wife" was pronounced, he had no longer presence of mind to consider whether it were probable, or even possible, that it could be her. Without replying a single word, he leaped out and fled in the utmost terror, leaving the lady to herself, and preferring rather to return to his infernal abode and render an account of his adventures, than run the risk of any further sufferings and vexations under the matrimonial yoke. And thus Belphagor again made his appearance in the infernal domains, bearing ample testimony to the evils introduced into a household by a wife; while Matteo, on his part, who knew more of the matter than the devil, returned triumphantly home, not a little proud of the victory he had achieved.

Novels of Agnolo Firenzuola.

AGNOLO FIRENZUOLA.

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THE name of this author is better known and far more celebrated throughout Italy than that of most of his contemporaries who particularly devoted themselves to one branch of composition. For he is no less distinguished in his character of a novelist than as a critic and a poet, and he is entitled to rank amongst the first classical scholars. His talents have been highly commended by Tiraboschi, Crescimbeni, and indeed all the critical historians from the period in which he flourished; while his life was twice written, once by Father Mieron, and again, in a much superior manner, by the learned Manni He was born at Florence, on the 28th of September 1493, and pursued his studies in the cities of Perugia and Sienna, where his acquaintance, however, with the Aretini was neither favourable to the proper direction of his genius nor to the correctness of his manners. In their letters we are presented with a lively and amusing, though by no means always an edifying, account of the manner in which they passed their time: their satirical and burlesque attacks upon each other, and humorous pieces of poetry, with abundant ridicule heaped upon their adversaries, happily contrasted with their mutual praises and exquisite conceit of themselves. Firenzuola is nevertheless said, with such qualifications, to have assumed the ecclesiastical habit, and to have become, according to Tiraboschi, *Monaco Vallombrosano*, belonging to the monastery of Santa Maria di Spoleti, in which order he attained to very considerable honours. After suffering from long-illness, of which he complains bitterly in one of his letters to his friend Aretino, he died about the age of fifty, towards the middle of the sixteenth century. The entire edition of his works appeared at Florence in 1763, containing his prose productions, novels, strictures upon the letters of Trissino, treatises upon animals, two comedies, a translation of Apuleius's "Golden Ass," applied to the circumstances of his own times, with a variety of other matter. These are distinguished as much for the ease and polish of their style as for the liveliness and diversity of their subjects, a circumstance that contributed not a little to their celebrity.

NOVELLA I.

IN ancient days, it is said, there flourished in Tuscany two noble citizens, both extremely wealthy, and both descended from good

families. Not satisfied, however, like too many, with the reputation acquired by their ancestors, nor esteeming the works of others as any kind of ornament to themselves, they vied with each other in conferring distinction upon their nobility by their actions, rather than in assuming it from the dignity of their birth. Thus in their correspondence, their manners, and the whole tenor of their life and transactions, they procured for themselves a high reputation throughout Florence, which was not a little enhanced by the mutual esteem and more than fraternal kindness that was invariably observed to exist between them. They were generally seen in company together, their pursuits were nearly congenial, and their days appeared to flow at once in so noble and so pure a stream, that Fortune herself seemed to respect their virtues and their happiness. Her smiles, however, as of old, were delusive, for Niccolo degli Albizi, one of these two friends, hearing of the decease of an uncle, his mother's brother, who died extremely rich in Valencia, leaving Niccolo, in default of children, his sole heir, was under the necessity of making a voyage into Spain. Mentioning his intention to his friend Coppo, the latter directly proposed, as he expected, to accompany him. Having made their arrangements, therefore, they were just upon the point of departure, when, unfortunately, Coppo's father was seized with a mortal distemper, which terminated his existence in a few days, a circumstance that left Niccolo no alternative but that of giving up his voyage or proceeding alone.

Adopting the latter resolution, after taking a sorrowful and affectionate leave, he bent his course towards Genoa, and there took his passage in a Genoese vessel upon the point of sailing for a Spanish port. It was now that his fortune first began to wear a different aspect; for the ship had hardly made fifty leagues from shore, when about sunset the sea was observed to become white and foamy, presenting at the same time various other signs of an approaching tempest. And before the master of the vessel had completed his orders, she was enveloped in a torrent of rain, while the fierce hurricane rendered her unmanageable, bearing her onwards in a shroud of mist and darkness that defied the eye of the oldest navigator. This soon became, if possible, more horridly appalling by contrast with the lurid flashes of lightning that broke athwart the gloom, consigning them again to utter darkness. Images of the most terrific nature haunted the fancy of the crew, thus suddenly deprived of all external objects; and it was piteous to think of the efforts of those who retained heart enough to struggle with the adverse elements, while they often adopted, in hope of rescue, measures that tended, perhaps, only to accelerate their own destruction. Even the stentorian voice of the master could no longer be heard through the storm, while the straining and rending of the masts and sails, intermingled with occasional cries, and the deep volleys of thunder rolling in the distance, formed altogether a union of appalling sounds that struck terror to the boldest spirit.

The danger still increased, and their remaining courage dying away in their last feeble efforts, soon wholly forsook them, for they were now borne mountains high, now plunged, as it were, into the abysses of the deep, from which the ship would again emerge, to the surprise

of all, like a sea-bird from the hollow caverns of the deep. So terrific indeed, before she yielded, did the scene appear, that the hair of the boldest sailor stood on end, as he felt rather than saw the furious commingling, the utter confusion, and the wild reverberation, of heaven, air, and sea. Alas! how hastily did the most niggardly and grasping hands consign their treasure, their richest silks and stuffs, to the remorseless deep, with all the precious metals that were first thrown overboard; though, when lightened of her load, she only seemed to drive more madly before the winds. The affrighted passengers, who had before sought to shun the sight of their approaching doom below, at length rushed tumultuously upon deck "The cabin is filling with water!" was the cry, while every sailor who before had stood to his post then fell on his knees, and embracing his nearest friend, and joining in the general cry of *Misericordia!* appeared to consign himself to his doom How many who wanted comfort themselves generously tried in that bitter moment to support others yet weaker and more appalled! How many who had seldom or never prayed were heard muttering faint and incoherent appeals to Heaven! Some called upon the Blessed Virgin, some upon San Niccolo di Bari, while others trusted to San Ermo; and pilgrimages to the holy sepulchre and religious vows were abundantly poured forth in the hope of being miraculously rescued, like Jonas, from the bowels of the deep The libertine was even heard to make a vow of marriage, dealers and usurers swore to make restitution; while such few as loved the world less uttered the most tender expressions to their absent fathers, mothers, children, and friends, at the same time mingling their pity for each other. While thus employed, the mainmast with a terrific crash went into the sea, which was the signal for the vessel's parting, hardly affording time for a few of the most bold and active to seize the scattered pieces of the wreck Niccolo, however, being among these last, supported himself with the aid of a small table, nor ever yielded his hold until he found himself thrown upon the coast of Barbary, a short way from Susa Being there perceived by a party of fishermen, they took compassion upon him, and conducted him to a small hut belonging to them, where they restored him to animation over a large fire Upon finding that he spoke in the Latin tongue, the fishermen, supposing him to be an infidel, and that they were not likely to catch any more valuable fish that morning, agreed to carry him instantly for sale to Tunis There they sold him to a wealthy merchant of the name of Lagi Amet, who, liking his youthful and gentlemanlike appearance, resolved to retain him about his own person In this service the captive displayed so much discretion and fidelity as to merit the regard of the whole household, but, most unfortunately for his master, of one in particular, the lovely wife of Amet having been unable to behold the pleasing and handsome stranger with indifference. Possessed of the greatest beauty and accomplishments, she remarked the superiority of his manners and appearance to every other person around her, and at first taking an innocent delight in hearing the narration of his life and travels, she soon began to feel uneasy when out of his company. She would sit and hear him converse, and gaze upon him

for hours, and yet so open and undisguised was her admiration, that Lagi Amet, entertaining no idea of the possibility of danger, made his beautiful lady a present of the amusing slave upon whom she bestowed so much attention. Overpowered with agitation and delight, she attempted to conceal the pleasure which such an offer gave her, and for some time succeeded in it, though she now began to be aware, when too late, of the real nature of her feelings. In spite of her caution, she was often on the point of betraying them to the object of her regard, but the idea of the confidence reposed in her by Amet, and of bestowing her affections upon a slave, deprived her of the power of utterance. Besides the difficulties she would have to encounter, her life, her honour, everything which she valued, would be at stake; and frequent and long were the struggles she made against the growing passion that consumed her. "Wretched creature that I am!" she would exclaim, "to be so deeply sensible of those superior merits and accomplishments that I must not love, nor hardly admire, and yet all these affections are bestowed upon a slave, an outcast, and a Christian, one who, upon the first glimpse of liberty, would leave thee to weep over thine own weakness in sorrow and despair! And how could he love me, indeed? Could a slave love me as he loves his own liberty? Oh, abandon the very thought! it is alike treason against my honour and my life! If I sacrifice myself, let it at least be for some nobler object; let it not be said that the wife of Amet died for a slave! But, alas! why did I not feel and act in this way before—before I became thus tortured, lost, abandoned to passion and despair? Besides, am I not wed—am I not already the property of another? Yes, it is madness to pursue the path I am in, and still I feel, I know, I have not strength to abandon it. If I yield not, if I tell him not all my love and sufferings to-day, should I continue still to see and to listen to him, I only prolong the period of my ruin until to-morrow. Let me hasten, then, and acquaint him while there is yet time; for though a foreigner and a slave, he has a noble spirit, and it is Fortune only that is to blame. She cannot rob him of those sweet and courteous manners, of that true nobility of soul that shines in every tone and look, and of all those virtues which seem to surround him with a radiant light that attracts my very soul, and which I feel sure he must possess beyond all the men I have ever seen. Can Fortune deprive him of these and of his noble birth? No; to be unfortunate is the common lot of all; and even were I the next moment to become a slave, should I not still be the same I now am? His ill fortune, therefore, ought not to make me love him the less; and who can say I may not be the happy means of bringing him over to the true faith, while at the same time he will on that account become more passionately attached to me? And why should a weak and wretched creature like myself attempt to master a feeling that has enslaved thousands of the wisest men upon earth? I must at least see and speak to him, though I refrain from giving him the most distant idea of my love!"

With these weak and dangerous sentiments, the unhappy lady, half reconciled to her fate, sought the presence of her handsome slave; nor was it long before this was followed by an explanation, that,

almost inarticulate between tears and blushes, invested Niccolo rather with the character of her lord than of her slave. Still he was long in doubt whether he ought to credit the words he heard, whether it were reality or a dream, a snare laid for his honour or the proudest tribute that could be rendered to his worth. At first, then, he was about to check the torrent of her feelings, expressing equal surprise and alarm at what he heard; but when he next reflected upon the many gentle tokens of her kindness and attention to him, and upon her superior sense and accomplishments beyond all the women he had ever seen, bethinking himself at the same time of the story of the Comte d'Anversa and the queen of France, besides many others, he began to consider the whole as nothing less than actual truth.

Warmly expressing his deep gratitude for the distinction conferred upon him, and far from being insensible to her transcendent beauty and accomplishments, the enslaved Niccolo bent himself lowly at his fair mistress's feet. Yet, possessing high and honourable principles, he resolved to make her his upon no other condition than consenting to be baptized in the name of Jesus of Nazareth. The lady, who had every inclination to become a believer on these terms, finding that she had no chance of adding him to the disciples of Mahomet, readily gave her consent, sealing it at the same time with a thousand Saracenic oaths: upon which Niccolo thought it incumbent upon him to explain a little more clearly the nature of the Christian religion and what it imposed upon her. Thinking the conditions at first a little hard, she made some slight demur, proposing that they should rather both embrace the doctrines of Mahomet, which were certainly more easy and much more likely to be fulfilled. Niccolo, however, assured her that as a Christian she was bound to observe as many duties as possible, and to pray for grace to perform such as she felt an inclination to omit; that she must never be weary of her task; that she must be found always watching, and not like the foolish virgins, who forgot to trim their lamps, and whose lights went out. On hearing him utter these words, she would certainly have pronounced him mad had she not already been too deeply in love. As it was, she contented herself with saying, after revolving a variety of confused ideas in her mind, "Come, you shall make me what you please;" and accordingly she was the same day baptized, christened, confessed, received the communion, and married to Niccolo according to the rites of the holy Church. And so sweet in a short time did its new mysteries and duties appear to her, that being naturally possessed of superior intellect and endowments, she no longer regretted the faith of her ancestors, and began to take delight in nothing so much as having the Christian doctrines expounded to her by the voice of Niccolo.

While she thus continued making daily progress under the judicious instructions of Niccolo in a subject so important to her best interests, Niccolo's friend, Coppo, in the meanwhile had not been idle, inquiring in all directions, wherever he conceived it probable that he might have been wrecked or captured. Not content with this, he himself set out in quest of him, and arrived at Tunis just as Niccolo happened to be passing with the lady close by the place where he was seen dismounting,

so that they met and recognised each other in the streets. Niccolo testified his gratitude to Coppo for so striking a proof of his fidelity, but at the same time requested him not to execute his intention of procuring his ransom until he should hear further from him; and then giving him his address, and shaking him cordially by the hand, he accompanied his lady home. A little surprised at this occurrence, the lady inquired, with a smile, who he was and what business he could have with her slave, being particularly jealous of everything that might interfere with her own views, questions which her Christian husband answered with his usual eloquence to her entire satisfaction. Yet, as we may easily believe, Niccolo was still anxious to return to his native land, but he was aware that if the enamoured lady discovered his design, she would effect his utter destruction, or at least would counteract his plans. He was therefore uncertain how to act, and for this reason he had exhorted Coppo to secrecy as to the object of his arrival. Besides, he would have preferred, rather than basely desert her, to remain in the pleasing slavery to which his adored lady had consigned him. Fly, however, somewhere, they shortly must, as she had now become so extravagantly attached to him that he was fearful of the affair reaching the ears of Lagi Amet. With this view, he now determined to persuade her to accompany him, insisting that it was one of the duties of a Christian wife to share her husband's fortunes and follow him wherever he went. He therefore considered the arrival of Coppo as a very fortunate circumstance, and after consulting with him, and reflecting upon the best method that could be adopted, they determined to carry her along with them. So Niccolo represented to his wife that there was no time to be lost, if they wished to avoid the fate of so many unfortunate lovers, who had fallen victims to the bowstring or the sack; and to this judicious opinion the lady, without any sort of hesitation, subscribed. "Yes," she added, "I will see your beautiful Italy; there is no question of it at all. whatever sacrifices I make, whatever pleasures and honours I relinquish, they are for your sake, and I shall not regret them. And yet I tremble when I think upon the dreadful risks I am about to encounter, even if I escape alive out of the hands of the savage infidel who called me his consort, whom it would perhaps be the wisest way to strangle before we go." Here Niccolo, grieved that she should have made so little progress in the duty of Christian charity, reminded her that she must no longer consider these things in the light she had been used to, adding that he felt inclined rather to pity the fate of Amet in being deprived of so much beauty and perfection, were it not that it was his paramount duty to convert infidels to the true faith. Then advising her to collect the whole of her treasures, but to respect the property of Amet, he hastened to fix the time and method of his departure with his friend Coppo.

All at length being in readiness, they planned a little pleasure party, feigning it was entirely for the amusement of Amet, to which the foolish infidel, not a little proud of so delicate a compliment, gladly consented. Having conveyed everything on board a fast-sailing little pinnace, they said that they would just pay a visit to one of the Dey's

large ships before they called for their master; and, hoisting all sail, they very wisely left the old merchant behind them. They had proceeded about half a league from shore, when some of Lagi Amet's servants, observing them pass the vessel at full sail and boldly hold on their course, raised a hue and cry that very quickly reached the ears of their master. Tearing his hair, at least what little was left of it, the credulous old infidel, in a fit of rage and despair, despatched boats in pursuit without number, employing himself in the meantime with trying different bowstrings and other refined instruments of torture to welcome their return. And unluckily, as it happened, though they escaped pursuit and set foot in safety on the Sicilian shore, they took up their quarters at an hotel in Messina, where the following unpleasant circumstances occurred. For the ambassador of the king of Tunis having that very day arrived at the same place to transact affairs of great importance at the court of Sicily, occupied apartments in the same house, and casting his eyes upon the disordered dress and dark complexion of the lady, he thought that he recognised in the fugitive one whom he had often seen at Tunis. At the same moment arrived letters advertising him of the lady's flight, and imposing upon him the duty of securing her person, with the leave of his Sicilian majesty, with whom he was to use his utmost influence to have her sent back to her own husband. So immediately requesting an audience, the ambassador expounded his master's wishes on the subject, and the king having verified the fact, expressed the greatest readiness to remand the fugitives, since it would afford pleasure to his ally, from whom at that time he was desirous of obtaining some essential favours. What were the feelings, then, of the unhappy party, who, imagining that they had secured their escape, found they had rushed upon their own destruction, and were to be consigned into the hands of an offended and relentless enemy! The heart of Coppo was torn with distraction for his friend, while the lovers uttered the most piteous cries and prayers, pleading also that they were united in faith and in marriage, both deserving of freedom, and both Christians. All, however, was of no avail, for the king, anxious to conciliate the Dey, commanded them to be re-embarked forthwith in the same vessel, under the care of one of his own captains, who had orders to land them in Barbary, and deposit them safely, with the king's compliments, in the hands of their lawful sovereign. And already were they proceeding upon their wretched voyage, with calm and favourable breezes, from which they turned in anguish to the shores that were receding from their view, when Fortune, as if weary at length of her continued persecutions, again raised a furious tempest before the vessel had time to make the port, and drove her back until she reached the Tyrrhene Sea, near Leghorn, where, broken and dismantled, she became the easy prey of some Pisan corsairs But noble ransom being offered them by the unfortunate captives, they were shortly afterwards put on shore, and at length arrived in safety, with some portion of their remaining treasures, at the city of Pisa. There, owing to the infinite dangers and sufferings to which she had been subjected, the hapless lady was seized with a fever that had nearly proved mortal, and it was the incessant

care and affection of Niccolo alone that succeeded in restoring her. Upon her recovery, they bent their way towards Florence, where, on their arrival, they were received with the utmost surprise and the warmest congratulations by all their friends, while feasts and revelry on all sides testified the joy that was felt for their return. When the health of his beloved proselyte and benefactress was a little recruited, Niccolo kindly proposed, for their more complete satisfaction, that his beloved wife should be again baptized in the Church of San Giovanni; and being christened by the name of Beatrice, she was once more solemnly espoused by him, with the utmost splendour and magnificence, according to the minutest rites and ceremonies of the Holy Church. At the same time, in order to bind their interests in a still nearer union, Niccolo bestowed upon his friend Coppo the hand of his sister, who, in addition to the charms of beauty, boasted likewise all the virtues of her brother. Beatrice, delighted with everything she saw and heard, even beyond the picture held out to her by the happy Niccolo, soon made such rapid progress in every desirable virtue and accomplishment as to astonish the Florentine ladies by the richness and vivacity of her ideas, and the charms of her manners and conversation. In a short time, also, she became so fondly attached to her new sister-in-law as to render it difficult to decide whether their friendship or that of their husbands was the most rare and exemplary. Certain it is that the two happy pairs passed their days in such entire amity and peace, that there never occurred the slightest cause of dissatisfaction or division, an instance of domestic happiness highly deserving of commemoration, and which attracted universal admiration and applause. Indeed, so far from becoming disagreeable to or weary of each other, they appeared daily to take more pleasure in one another's company, and more intent upon amusing, gratifying, and instructing themselves and their friends around them, in such a manner that, becoming extremely popular with all parties, they exercised the most happy and beneficial influence over the manners and feelings of the people of Florence

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NOVELLA X.

It was a privilege enjoyed by the relater of the tenth or last story of the day, in Boccaccio's "Decameron," occasionally to leave the beaten track, and enter upon any fresh subject which might be thought most agreeable; an example which, in the present instance, as I am the last in the series, I intend to follow. Proclaiming a truce, therefore, to our love adventures, which have occupied us nearly the whole of the day, I wish to amuse you with some account of a certain friar of Novara who flourished about twenty years ago. You hardly need to be told that, among all ranks and conditions of men, the good people to be met with are more rare than those of an opposite description; so that I trust you will not be very greatly surprised to hear that in the holy brotherhood there are not a few who fall short of perfection,

and even of what the rules of their order require. Nor ought we to think it strange that the vice of avarice, which bears such sway in the courts of princes, both spiritual and temporal, should sometimes take up her residence in the cloisters of the poor brothers.

It happened that in the town of Novara, a very pretty city of Lombardy, there dwelt a rich widow lady, whose name was Donna Agnes. She had worn her weeds with persevering sorrow ever since the death of her dear Gaudenzio de' Piotti, who, besides her dowry, which was very handsome for a lady in those parts, had left her other possessions that put her very much at her ease, even though she should prefer worshipping his memory to any new connection. She had borne him, moreover, four boys, whose education would now devolve upon her alone. But this excellent and considerate husband was scarcely laid at rest in the ground, before tidings of this his last will and testament reached the ears of the superior of the convent of San Nazaro, situated a little way beyond the gate of San Agabio. This same good monk was commissioned by the society to keep an eye upon testamentary donations, so that no widow should pass him by without affording at least her mite and assuming the girdle of the seraphic St. Francis. Having been once admitted as lay sisters into their order, many of these devotees were in the habit of frequenting their congregation, and offering up prayers for the souls of their deceased friends, expressing their gratitude to the poor brethren in the shape of fine Bologna sausages and pasties, and were occasionally induced, in their zeal for imitating the good works of the blessed Fra Ginepro, and other renowned saints, to endow some little chapel for the convenience of the order, where they might represent the glorious history of St. Francis, as he was seen preaching to the birds in the desert, engaged in kneading the holy bread, or at the moment when the Angel Gabriel brought him his saintly slippers. The chapel once built, it was not very difficult to raise sufficient from the same quarter to defray an annual festival in honour of the saint's holy stripes, and to celebrate every Monday a mass for the souls of all his followers who might still happen to be suffering the pains of purgatory. But as, consistent with their profession of poverty, the good brethren could not openly avail themselves of these gifts, they adopted the ingenious method of endowing their holy buildings, and holding the property as appurtenant to the sacristies, imagining they could thus as easily impose upon Heaven as upon us poor credulous mortals here below; as if their real motives, and all the envy, pride, and covetousness, concealed under the large cowls of pursy monks, were not fully as evident to an all-seeing eye as those vices that are more clearly apparent in the broad light of the day. These are they who, instead of begging their bread barefoot, or preaching to the people as they ought to do wherever they appear, prefer sitting at ease in their well-stored monasteries, supplied with delicate changes of shoes and linen, some five pair of Cordova slippers, silk stockings, and sweet, dainty fare. And when they can muster sufficient exertion, or it is quite necessary for them to go abroad, they mount their mules, as elegantly attired as themselves, or pretty palfreys, whose paces are of the easiest, so as never to produce a feeling

of fatigue. They are equally cautious not to burden the mind with too much study, finding the truth of the Scripture observation, that it is indeed "a weariness to the flesh;" besides the holy dread they entertain, as in the case of Lucifer, of its producing pride, and thus incurring the risk of a fall from their state of monastic innocence and simplicity.

But to return to our devout inspector of the property of rich widows. It is certain that he followed so closely in pursuit of the lady in question, and made so much noise in his poor wooden clogs, that for peace sake she was soon compelled to add her name to those of the third order, an arrangement from which the poor brethren drew a regular supply of alms, besides warm jackets and richly-worked tunics. But, not content with this, and imagining nothing done while anything remained to do, he placed monks round her all day long, to remind her of the superior efficacy of endowing a whole chapel, if she really consulted the benefit of her soul. The lady, however, having four sons, at first thought it rather hard to rob them of their substance in favour of the monks, and being, like some of her sex, by no means liberally inclined, she tried to amuse them for some time with fair words, though resolved in her own mind to stick fast to her property. Just about the period that the good brethren imagined they had brought her over to their purpose and succeeded in obtaining the mention of their new chapel in her will, it happened that she was taken suddenly unwell, and, in spite of all medical assistance, died. Before breathing her last, she sent in haste for the superior of San Nazaro to receive her dying confessions, who, imagining he was now about to reap the harvest of his toils in laying such long siege to the widow's purse, very frankly told her how necessary it was, after having made confession, to show a little more charity towards her own soul while it remained yet in her power, and not to rely upon her sons offering up any sort of compensation for her sins in the way of alms and masses after her decease. It was his duty to remind her of the fate of her friend Donna Leonora Caccia, the wife of Messer Cervagio, doctor of laws, who, at the time he spoke, was suffering in purgatory through the wicked neglect of her sons, who had never burnt a single taper since the day of her funeral. Alarmed at the idea of being in a similar predicament, and feeling extremely weak and troubled, such was the impression of the monk's oratory, that she was just on the point of yielding her consent and calling for her will; but still balancing between the opposite interests of her soul and of her family, she declared that she would make up her mind before he should return again on the morrow. The good priest, shaking his head, reminded her of the danger of delay in a case of such paramount importance, and, under pain of great future suffering, hinted at the propriety of the alteration being made before his return the next day. In the meanwhile, the widow's second son, Agabio, having in some way got scent of this negotiation, communicated his fears to his brothers, who agreed with him that it was of the utmost consequence to overhear what should take place on the priest's return. So when Fra Serafino, the superior, arrived the next day, with the intention of concluding the bargain,

Agabio took a station which enabled him to hear every word that passed; and such, he found, was the effect of the monk's eloquence, and so dreadful his denunciations of purgatory, that the poor lady was glad to receive absolution upon condition of leaving the sum of two hundred ducats for the purpose of endowing and ornamenting a chapel. Another hundred was to be appropriated to the purchase of the sacred vessels and other articles requisite to the celebration of mass in proper style, besides an annual festival and a service for the souls of the dead. To these was to be added a small farm, situated very conveniently for the use of the poor brotherhood, at Camigliano, worth at least three thousand ducats; in consideration of which, having arranged everything necessary respecting the title, and that the whole should be drawn up by a regular notary as soon as possible, the happy monk absolved the good widow and took his leave.

Agabio, who had heard all that passed, lost no time in acquainting his brothers, all of whom were of opinion that it was not an affair to be trifled with. So, after consulting some of their friends, they proceeded to their mother's chamber, and with some difficulty, by help of a less fastidious confessor, who absolved her on easier terms, they prevailed upon her to leave her will as it was. This done, they next despatched a confidential servant with a message to the wily monk in their mother's name, begging that he would no longer give himself the trouble of calling, as her sons, having got to hear the nature of his business, were bent upon doing him some grievous mischief in case they should meet with him at her house, that she begged him at the same time not to make himself at all anxious upon the subject, as the holy brotherhood would find everything arranged to their entire satisfaction in her last bequest.

Upon receiving these tidings, Fra Serafino took the hint, and giving himself no little credit for his successful negotiation, he abstained from troubling the lady further. But in a few days he had the gratification of hearing that she had breathed her last, and directly hastened, according to his instructions, to the house of Ser Tomeno, the notary, who had already been apprised by Agabio in what way he was to act By him he was informed that he ought immediately to wait upon Agabio and his brothers, into whose hands he had committed the will the day before, when he might possibly hear of something to his advantage. Without replying a single word, the delighted friar hastened to inspect its contents, and after duly condoling with the young men upon their loss, he came at once to the point, and requested Agabio to let him see the will. The latter, expressing his surprise at this question, requested to know the reason of his troubling himself with affairs that no way concerned him; an observation at which the holy man began to express his dissatisfaction, but was threatened by Agabio with no very pleasing consequences in case he did not forthwith proceed to take sanctuary in his own monastery. Not in the least daunted, however, at this reception, the wily monk made his bow with a malicious smile, and departed without deigning to say a word; and calling upon a certain Messer Niccola, procurator to the order, he put five soldi into his hands, and requested to know

his opinion. Having heard the particulars of the case, Messer Niccola, without further hesitation, sent a summons to Ser Tomeno, Agabio's notary, citing him to appear before the bishop's vicar with a copy of the last will and testament of the deceased.

Ser Tomeno, the moment he had perused this document, lost no time in acquainting Agabio with the progress of the affair, and he, desiring nothing better, took his attorney along with him, and called privately at the house of the vicar, who happening to be a particular friend of his, heard the whole proceedings from beginning to end;—the good friar's long and difficult negotiations, Agabio's stratagems to counteract him, and the commencement of the present process. Now the vicar, as belonging to the order of the priesthood, was by no means overburdened with affection towards the friars, and expressed his satisfaction at hearing what had passed. Upon the following day, at the hour appointed for the parties to make their appearance, came Fra Serafino, accompanied by the procurator of his convent, both of whom were extremely noisy, and bent upon obtaining a sight of the will immediately. Agabio, in answer to their appeal, said, "Good Messer Vicar, may it please your reverence, I have not the slightest objection to the production of the will, provided that all the parties whose names are therein mentioned consent to fulfil the articles according to the letter, of whatever nature they may be."

"Say no more," interrupted the vicar; "all that is very clear; for our laws are very particular on this point, and whoever comes in for the benefit must also incur the inconvenience of such bequests. Let us have this document, then; it is only what is lawful and reasonable." and Agabio, instantly taking a scroll out of his pocket, handed it to the opposite notary for perusal. After running over the leading particulars relating to the heirs, and several legacies inserted for the purpose of giving the whole a greater air of reality, he came to the part that concerned the friar, the tenor of which ran in the following manner: "*Item*, I will and bequeath, for the better preservation of my sons' fortune and for the general benefit of all the widows in Novara, that there be given by the hands of my own children the amount of fifty lashes upon the back of Fra Serafino, at this time being the guardian or superior of the convent of San Nazaro; and that the said lashes be of the best and soundest in the power of my sons' hands to inflict. And be it further stated, that these are intended to serve as an example to the rest of his brotherhood how they venture in future to impose upon poor credulous women or feeble old dotards, basely and maliciously persuading them to disinherit and impoverish their own flesh and blood for the purpose of ornamenting cells and chapels"

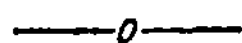
Here the risible muscles of the notary would permit him to proceed no further, and his laugh was speedily caught and re-echoed through the whole court; insomuch that the poor friar, overwhelmed with ridicule and confusion, sought to make good his escape, and find the way back to his convent, though fully resolved in his own mind to bring the whole affair, in form of appeal, before the high apostolic chamber. But he was not doomed to end the matter in quite so

honourable a manner; for Agabio, seizing fast hold of his gown, exclaimed, "Tarry a little, holy father! why are you in such a hurry? I am come here for the purpose of fulfilling the conditions of the will, and these must be complied with;" and then appealing to the vicar, while he held the good father tight by his band, "I require to know from you, as the judge, why Father Serafino should not be entitled to the benefit of his bequest, mounted on the great horse, and receive from my hands the amount of the legacy due to him. If this be not granted, I shall feel bound to appeal to a superior tribunal against the undue partiality and injustice of this court." The good vicar, receiving the whole of this with an air of mock solemnity, turning towards Agabio, replied, "My good Messer Agabio, your beneficent intentions respecting the worthy father no one surely can dispute; but I dare-say he will be inclined to rest satisfied with them, without insisting upon the execution of the deed, in particular, as it might possibly bring some degree of scandal upon his cloth, while at the same time that it would be painful to him, such inheritance would produce no sort of benefit to the holy brotherhood. Besides, if he be so truly disinterested as not to wish to accept the kind bequest of your mother, I hardly see how you can venture to force it upon him, and I would rather permit him to take his leave, with the noble consciousness that he bears no marks of your favour along with him."

Upon this hint Fra Serafino acted, and, full of mingled rage, fear, and vexation, retreated to his own abode, which he did not again quit for many days, out of apprehension of the ridicule of the people. His punishment, however, was followed by the desired effect; for from that time forth he was never known to solicit widow ladies for their fortunes to endow chapels, especially such as had families of sons, by whom he might again run the risk of being severely handled. As it was, he had the good fortune to escape martyrdom from their hands, and contrived to digest his spleen and disappointment by patience, as every good Christian ought. According, however, to a different version of the story, trumped up, it is supposed, by some of the friars for the credit of their order, and as I was myself informed by one of them, that same wicked vicar had soon reason to repent of the part he bore in the affair, having to pay no less a fine than five hundred florins.

Pietro Fortini.

PIETRO FORTINI.[1]



ONE of the most lively, and, we are concerned to add, one of the most exceptionable authors of Italian tales who flourished during the sixteenth century, was Pietro Fortini. A solitary specimen is with some difficulty here presented to the reader. It is impossible to regret the comparative rarity and obscurity of the remainder. From the critical observations of Signor Gaetano Poggiali, we learn that few notices relating to the life and writings of this novelist have survived to us; nor will this prove any great additional source of regret. The cause of this has been referred by the same writer to the want of a due appreciation of the value of literary memorials by the city of Sienna, —a neglect which has since been very amply and laudably supplied by Ugurgieri, Pecci, and Gigli, and in particular, by Benvoglienti, whose persevering researches have often been rewarded with success. In the present instance, however, the year of Fortini's birth still remains uncertain, though it is probable that he wrote during the earlier half of the sixteenth century; and from the entry of a date remaining in the convent of St. Dominic, his decease seems to have occurred in the year 1562. He was descended from a good family of some repute and influence at Sienna, and was in easy circumstances, as would appear from his frequent residence at one of his villas near that city, named Monaciano, yet in possession of some of the author's descendants. Judging, however, from one of his letters addressed to Braccioni, as well as from one of his novels, and from some poetical pieces interspersed throughout his *Novelliere*, the tranquillity of his life was destined to suffer interruption; an event of which the particulars are unknown, but which was most probably connected with those revolutionary movements which preceded the downfall of his native state.

It was during his residence in the country that his fictitious productions seem to have been composed, whether in honourable banishment, or remaining at his villa out of choice, does not clearly appear. Though they are mentioned as *racconti di fatti accaduti più che favolosi*, related in turn by five young ladies and two gentlemen, yet we would hope, for the credit of the age, of the relaters, and of the hearers, that they were rather fabulous than true. The style, if not very pure, is extremely lively and pleasing, and each novel is closed with poetical pieces of more than common merit. They were published at Sienna, but the date of the first editions does not appear.

[1] "Le Giornate delle Novelle de' Novizi, divise in otto Giornate," &c.; and, "Le Piacevoli ed Amorose Notti dei Novizi," &c.

NOVELLA XIII.

In the noble city of Spoleti, in Umbria, there resided, not many years ago, a young man of the name of Anton Luigi Miglioielli, nobly born, but of a strange and whimsical disposition. Being also of a sanguine temperament, combined with too little judgment, he had the misfortune to imagine himself in love with a very beautiful and accomplished young lady, sprung from one of the first families in Spoleti, whose name was Fiordespina. What rendered the affair worse, she had already bestowed her hand in marriage upon another, a wealthy citizen of good descent, called Filolauro, from which his lady most generally went by the name of Fiordespina Lauri. In point of manly beauty and accomplishments, Filolauro was in no way unworthy of possessing so charming a companion; nor do I believe that throughout all Italy there was a similar instance of conjugal union, happiness, and fidelity. Such, indeed, were the mutual sacrifices, the devotion, and tenderness which they invariably displayed, as to afford a perfect pattern of the respective characters and the conduct to be observed in so intimate a union. Their happiness seemed as if it were too exquisite and unalloyed to last, and the secret fiend that was about to invade the Eden of their love and repose was already at work, inspiring the soul of Anton Luigi with thoughts equally dangerous to their safety and their honour. Ardently bent upon the pursuit of every object in which he engaged, and having frequent opportunities of enjoying the society and observing the charms and accomplishments of the lovely Fiordespina, he grew so deeply enamoured of them, that in a short time he felt himself unable to control the expression of his feelings.

Yet, after having adopted every expedient in his power, all the arts and flatteries of which he was the master, he had the mortification to find that he not only made no progress in her good opinion, but that she did not even deign to notice his numerous efforts to conciliate and please her. Equally piqued and impassioned, he vowed to be revenged upon her supposed pride and indifference; while he was compelled at the same time to conceal his attentions as much as possible, as the manners of the people of Spoleti were far more strict in this respect than those of many other places, persons of both sexes being in the habit of revenging themselves upon very slight provocation, and even of bearing arms, when occasion required, in open field against their enemies. And there is no point upon which they are more eager to proceed to extremities than in regard to the honour of their women, so that they will scarcely permit the breath of heaven to play upon the faces of their married dames of rank, while the husbands, on the other hand, are not permitted to show the least regard for single ladies. Thus our unfortunate lover found himself rather awkwardly situated, his feelings being about as unpleasant as those of a culprit preparing for his final journey, since his beloved Fiordespina paid no more attention to him than if there had been no such person in the world, a behaviour which he felt far more difficult to bear than if she had honoured him with her resentment, or even her aversion and contempt.

In this dilemma he believed the wisest as well as the shortest way would be to put a period to his existence; but always when he was on the point of executing his threat, the idea that he was for ever leaving the beautiful Fiordespina flashed across his mind, and he relinquished it. Still he conceived it quite incumbent upon him either to die like a true lover or win the lady's regard, and with this magnanimous resolution he watched his first opportunity of obtaining a final interview with the lady. Happening to hear that Filolauro was about to accompany a party of young men on an excursion of pleasure into the country, he had no sooner watched the servant who followed him fairly out of sight, than he hastened to his house, but had the mortification to perceive the beloved object in company with two of her youthful companions. Upon this his exasperation was such as to mount to a degree of frenzy, and being in a most favourable mood for listening to the counsels of our great adversary, who is never known to neglect such happy opportunities of adding to the number of his subjects, he resolved in one way or other to bring the matter to a conclusion, whether it were by dagger, rope, or poison, that very evening. With this view he continued to keep watch until after Filolauro's return, who, being accustomed to walk out with his friends, sometimes as far as the Borgo San Maffio, when the evening was fine, upon this occasion did not take leave of them until near midnight. His beautiful wife, whose thoughts were ever with him in his absence, anxious at the lateness of the hour, was now eagerly looking out for him, after having prepared what viands she imagined would prove most agreeable on his return. Filolauro had just reached the piazza near the fort, close to his own house, when he was met by Antonio Luigi full of the most desperate designs, who, drawing his sword, cried out in great fury, "At last, villain, thou art dead!" at the same moment wounding him severely. "Ah! traitor," exclaimed the other, "this to me!" and rushing upon him, he closed with him before he could make his escape. The noble lady, overhearing some disturbance, and recognising her consort's voice, with the courage that distinguished the ladies of Spoleti, instantly seized her husband's javelin that lay at hand, and rushed to the door. There she indeed beheld him struggling in the grasp of his assassin, while his blood stained the ground upon which they fought; and sufficiently distinguishing the combatants by the light of the moon, with the strength of an Amazon, she passed the weapon through the body of Anton Luigi at a single blow. He instantly fell dead at her feet, while she, crying out to her husband that he was only wounded, besought him to take refuge in the house. By the time she had assisted him back and restored the javelin to its place, a numerous crowd was collecting upon the spot, some of whom, observing the way they took, followed them into the house, where they found the lady attempting to staunch her husband's wounds, at the same time trying to encourage him and calling out for assistance. Discovering no weapon but the sword lying by the side of the deceased, they were unable to account for what they saw; and having borne the body of Anton Luigi into an adjoining church and procured surgical aid for the wounded man, the people gradually dispersed.

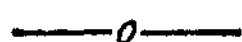
On the following morning, the governor, hearing of the homicide, and no one being accused of it, thought it somewhat strange, and instituted a more strict inquiry. Being a native of Lucca, of severe character, and not very kindly disposed towards the ladies of Spoleti, he despatched his officers at once to the residence of the fair Fiordespina, with orders to seize her, together with her husband, the last of whom, wounded as he was, they threw into a dungeon. His unhappy wife was next conducted bound into the hall allotted for the execution of assassins, where, the evidence of some persons in the crowd being taken, she was actually condemned by her merciless judge to suffer the torture of the question. But rather than accuse either her husband or herself of having committed such an act, which she had reasons for knowing that her inexorable judge would never admit to have been done in self-defence, she chose to submit, with the fortitude of a martyr, to everything that his cruelty could devise. Moved with pity at her sufferings, several of the spectators voluntarily came forward to prove that no weapon except that of the deceased had been found upon the spot, and that it was hardly likely that a single woman could have deprived a soldier of his own sword and of his life

To this the savage tyrant only replied that such was more probably the case than that so noble a youth should have destroyed himself; and upon this he commanded the executioners to proceed When, however, the populace, who believed her to be innocent, heard her renewed cries, there ran a confused murmur among the crowd, that, gradually assuming a louder and more angry tone, reminded the cruel governor that he had to deal with the proud and daring natives of Spoleti Finding his victim resolutely bent against confession, he began to take the alarm, and ordering her to be set free, he consoled himself with the hope of inflicting still heavier punishment upon her husband. For this purpose he had him brought forth, and condemned to suffer yet more terrific pains than had been inflicted upon his wife. The moment, however, she beheld him in the presence of their ferocious tormentor, she was unable to bear the very idea, much less the sight, of the most beloved object on earth sharing with her the same fate. Although instant death became the penalty of her confession, yet, in order to spare him the suffering she had herself so nobly borne, she thus addressed the governor "Unbind that gentleman, signor. Never let it be said that a savage and remorseless tyrant, such as thou art, had it in his power to inflict his savage torments upon the limbs of my honoured lord No, it was I who did the deed. Hear me, I say! I alone smote the assassin of my husband dead at my feet. Oh! ye just heavens, ye noble people of Spoleti, be near me, aid me in my utter woe; let him not deprive me of the only object that is dear to these eyes!" At once surprised and grieved to hear her declare herself guilty of an act by a confession which the severest tortures had failed to wring from her, the spectators, as well as the governor himself, struck with the excessive proof of affection which it displayed, were inclined to consider it as little less than miraculous What must have been the excess of tenderness and attachment that could excite the soul of a delicate woman to such an unexampled degree of heroism

and magnanimity as to confess, out of pity and affection for her husband, what she would otherwise have concealed under the infliction of torture and of death itself! To such an appeal even the heart of the governor, callous and ferocious as he was, could no longer be insensible. Taken by surprise, astonished at the grandeur and beauty of sentiment it displayed, and of which he had formed no previous idea, after remaining lost in doubt and wonder for some moments, his aspect assumed a perfectly opposite expression, and in milder tones than he had ever before perhaps uttered, he commanded the officers to unbind her husband He next sent for the father of the deceased, requesting to know what course he wished to be pursued. The poor old man, thus unhappily deprived of his son, yet aware that no cause of enmity had subsisted between the families, nobly came forward to state everything he knew relating to the unfortunate passion of his son, and boldly taxed the governor with the most culpable conduct in having omitted to receive his evidence until he had unjustly condemned the innocent to suffer. At the same time he tenderly embraced the unhappy prisoners, and weeping over the guilty conduct of his son, appealed to the feelings of the spectators, conjuring them to join in soliciting a free pardon, if pardon it could be called, where no offence had been committed, at the hands of the governor. The relenting feelings of the latter at length yielded to the energy and truth of the old man's appeal; for, having liberated the captives, he descended from his judgment-seat, and, struggling with contending emotions, turned away from the spectators, and soon disappeared.

Novels of Gentile Sermini.

GENTILE SERMINI.



It has been a fertile source of dispute among the historical critics of Italy, more especially those of Sienna, to fix the precise period in which this writer flourished. This would appear, in a great measure, to have arisen from the novelist's own desire to antedate his productions, conferring upon them a more antiquated style and character (doubtless in order to rank in the list of earlier and purer writers) than was usual with the less studied novelists of his own day. Thus, if we are to give credit to his own account, as contained in a MS. discovered and treated of by Apostolo Zeno in his "Annotations upon Fontanini," he must have flourished about the time of Boccaccio, to whom, in order to give more probability to his story, he directs a letter; and the frequent allusions throughout his work would lead us to suppose that he wrote about the year 1349 Upon the authority of Zeno, we are bound to believe that he really lived during the middle or latter half of the fifteenth century, while by others he is referred to a still later period. From the same author we learn that he belonged to a Siennese family, and produced about forty-five novels, two others being subsequently discovered by him, or at least one, divided into two in the MS. by the copyist, a very sufficient ground for an Italian controversy, and that they were, according to the usual practice, of a somewhat corrupt style and free character. The MS. was considered by Zeno as extremely valuable, being an only copy, and attributed by him to an earlier period than it deserved. Written upon parchment, its whole style and character seemed to authorise the supposition of its having originated two or three centuries before the critic's time, when in fact it has since been proved to belong to the latter part of the fifteenth, or to the beginning of the sixteenth century. To each of the tales is prefixed the usual title, explaining its nature, written in red characters; and in addition to the stories, there is inserted a singular specimen of idiomatic phraseology, entitled, "Il Giuoco della Pugna," a feigned letter to a friend, and a number of sonnets, canzoni, and ballate, amounting to thirty-four. We further learn from Signor Pellegrini that an attempt was made to retouch, or rather to injure, a portion of this beautiful MS. in the text, by altering the commencing letters *Tu* so as to read *Voi*, which but too plainly appears, though happily this species of mutilation was not carried much further. —(*Lettera Dedicatoria*.)

NOVELLA III.

In the province of Cabar, in Asia, there once flourished two noble and magnificent cities, situated within ten leagues of each other, called Soriana and Belfiore. Jealous of their respective power and influence, they merely observed an external show of amity, and, though engaged in commercial intercourse, they never cordially united together. The people of Soriana being the most powerful of the two, frequently threatened the independence of those of Belfiore, and attempted by every means in their power to weaken and humiliate them Well aware of their danger, the latter, rather than submit an inch of their dominions to the sovereignty of the Soriani, were prepared to throw themselves into the arms of the Christians or the Jews, and even to renounce the faith of their ancestors. Now, in the city of Belfiore there was a noble youth of the name of Gallio, who happened to be deeply enamoured of a young girl named Cardina, daughter of the great Marmoreo, who, strongly opposing the attachment of the young people, took measures to have the lover falsely accused and declared a rebel to the state. Immediately after his banishment, Gallio set out for the city of Soriana, and there learning that Marmoreo himself had been the author of his disgrace, stung with a feeling of resentment, he adopted the most subtle plans of revenge (inveighing bitterly against the father), all of which he as suddenly abandoned when he reflected upon the unaltered passion which he felt for the daughter.

At such times he would exclaim, "Oh, wretched, wretched Gallio! How dare I even imagine these means of revenge?—revenge at the expense of my beloved Cardina! To injure her father is to injure her—her whom I must ever worship and ever serve, though the daughter of my bitterest enemy! Oh, distraction! I am torn with contending duties, I am injured, and I burn for revenge; I love, and yet I am about to offend the object of my idolatry. For, alas! I must do it, or remain for ever dishonoured! Hath he not driven me forth as a rebel and a traitor from my native place? Yet thou, my love, my Cardina, wert not here to blame, for I fondly trust thou hast shed tears over my lot When shall I behold thee—when return to Belfiore again? Oh, ye gods! that I could cease to think, cease to exist, under the cruel thoughts that rack me! For revenge ought to call louder than my love, and yet I know I can do nothing to displease her Fester thy base heart, Marmoreo, that could conceive the foul and vindictive purpose of rendering me the veriest wretch that loads earth's weary bosom, weary of such monsters as thee!"

Gallio having thus resolved to abandon all measures of vengeance, absence and hopelessness had soon the effect of weakening his love In the course of a year or two the image of Cardina ceased to haunt his fancy, but feelings of revenge and hatred, on the other hand, seemed to have usurped its place. She no longer continued to stand, like a good genius, between him and her father, and after revolving a thousand schemes of vengeance in his mind, he resolved, in order to deprive his enemy both of his authority and his life, to attempt the

subjugation of his countrymen under the yoke of the Soriani. With this view he made himself acquainted with a party whose secret object was to watch every opportunity of rendering themselves masters of Belfiore. The number appointed consisted of fifteen, and to these Gallio discovered his design of subjecting his native place, observing, at the same time, "I require of you nothing further than the power of disposing as I please of the persons of Marmoreo and Cardina: the one for the sake of vengeance; the other, I trust, to be treated in a kinder way." To this the confederates gave their ready consent, and the conspiracy was matured before the beginning of the ensuing year; while a number of persons, amounting to sixty, of Sorian families which had long resided at Belfiore, united with them, in order better to betray the place. Among these, Saladino, who had the command of the Porta Marina, was the most powerful, his family having enjoyed many lucrative offices of high trust in Belfiore during a period of nearly two hundred years. With him Gallio and his party arranged the manner in which they were to be admitted through the said gate; and at the appointed hour the whole force of the Soriani was secretly marched by night into the province of Belfiore. Gallio, having been intensely engaged during many days previous, allowing himself little time for sleep, devoted a few moments to repose before setting out on his final exploit, and tried to compose himself to rest. In this state of suspense the idea of Cardina naturally occurred to his mind; and the goddess of love attempting, from compassion, to counteract the influence of Mars and Saturn that so greatly predominated in him, presented her image in his slumbers, arrayed in more than her usual beauty, and with an expression of sorrow and tenderness in her countenance, while she seemed to say that her everlasting love and gratitude should be the reward of his forbearance, if he would consent to abandon his cruel and sanguinary designs. So vivid was the impression upon his mind, that, opening his arms as if to embrace her, he awoke, and found he had clasped only his sword that lay at his side. With a feeling of rage and disappointment, he felt inclined to turn it against his own bosom, so strongly had his dream affected him, and altered his previous resolution of persevering in his enterprise His love for Cardina also seemed to acquire renewed strength, and recollecting every word and action of the vision, his desire of vengeance and all his bitter hatred against her father was forgotten as he burst into a passionate flood of tears. Then the hopes of mutual passion which she appeared to hold out to him in his dreams, and the expression of her grief and trouble, all combined to turn the tide of his feelings into a more loyal and patriotic course. Suddenly acting under the impulse of this change, he summoned his fellow-conspirators, exiles, like himself, from Belfiore, to a secret meeting, and proceeded to address them in the following words: "Fellow-citizens and brothers! Can it be true that we are about to destroy the place that gave us birth and to betray the city of our ancestors into the hands of her deadliest foes? Let us pause ere we produce irreparable evils, that may call down on us the execration of posterity, by turning our arms against our native land, that ought to be directed against its enemies. Alas!

how shall we bear to see the Soriani lords of us and of our countrymen, ourselves the worst of vassals! For let us not flatter ourselves that we shall reap other than the traitor's reward. Honour and treachery are yet in our power to choose. Fellow-citizens, which shall we embrace?" "Honour and our country!" exclaimed all with one voice. "Stay, hear me further," cried Gallio, taking advantage of the enthusiasm he had produced; "a messenger is just arrived, bringing me such tidings that, if you have heart to join me, we will return to our own city, but not without the glory of having first vanquished its enemies!" Inspired with the fervour of his patriotism, the whole of his companions promised to follow him whithersoever he would lead. "Then," cried Gallio, "let one of you attend me," and he selected the man he wished, "and let the rest await us here!" Having thus agreed upon the course they were to pursue, Gallio, along with his companion, affected to proceed with the scheme as before, and, under the pretence of an interview with Saladino, the governor of the Porta Marina, in order to fix upon the signals that were to be given for entering into the city of Belfiore, they proceeded forwards on horseback, until they reached Castel Fioralto, of which the governor, Parione, was one of the principal citizens, and strongly exasperated against the people of Soriana on account of their having cruelly slain his father, and with him they took further counsel about their plans. On his inquiring into the cause of their arrival, Gallio replied, "We are come to inform you that it is in our power either to destroy or make our city twice as powerful as it is, and as we are quite aware of your wishes, we shall reveal everything to you just as it occurred."

On hearing the particulars, Parione expressed his entire concurrence, and united in their plans with the utmost joy. Having matured these and sworn fidelity to each other, Parione, speedily mounting horse, took his leave, and arrived before sunset at Belfiore, where presenting himself before Patrioni, master of the palace where the seigniory held their sittings, he desired him to call a secret meeting of a hundred of the chief citizens of the place. This done, and the subject being proposed, it met with the general approbation of the whole assembly; and instantly closing all the gates and doubling the guards, they gave orders for the arrest of Saladino and the sixty conspirators, ready prepared for the undertaking. Upon being subjected to the question and confronted with Gallio, they made confession and were placed in strict confinement. The whole city, in the meantime, was put under arms and prepared for the reception of the force of the Soriani led on by Gallio. About two hours before daylight, the tramp of horse was heard approaching, and Saladino was compelled to open the gate, as had been agreed upon, at the appointed signals, betraying his party to destruction, on condition that his own and his children's lives should be spared; the whole of his family, in case of his failure, being involved in one common ruin. When the time approached, therefore, though desirous of saving his own party, he opened the gates by command of Gallio, and the hostile force, led on by the chief citizens of Soriana, rushed forward into the city. Many of the leaders were richly armed and caparisoned, vieing with each

other in the splendour of their appearance, and shining with gold and precious gems, ornaments in which their country abounded. Add to these, the great variety of burnished shields, lances, bows, and quivers, with dark plumes nodding in the air, and the flash of arms glittering through the moonlight. Thus proudly decorated are the Soriani accustomed to march forth to meet their enemies in the open field, the chief lords and gentlemen eagerly pressing forward in the van, leaving the least considerable of the citizens to bring up the rear. Marshalled, accordingly, in their best array, the Soriani now arrived at the Porta Marina, where, received by Saladino, they believed themselves upon the point of becoming masters of the city. By the advice of Gallio, they immediately marched forward and took possession of the cloister of Diana's temple, to the number of six thousand men, while three thousand were held in reserve in the temple of Mercury. Before daybreak, however, just as they imagined they were on the point of striking a decisive blow, they were startled by the loud clash of arms above them, and looking up, beheld crowds of armed men lining the walls of the great cloister of Diana, the chiefs of whom addressed the astonished Soriani with the cry of, "Yield, traitors, yield; or death to our prisoners!" at the same time showering down loads of burning combustibles upon their heads, so as to convince them they had not the least chance of escape. After some threats of rage and despair, the Soriani, finding every means of opposition useless, were induced to surrender, and threw down their arms. The whole of their rich equipage and all their golden ornaments became the spoil of their adversaries, while they were themselves led away in ranks of ten to be consigned to the gloomy dungeons of Sabar. Their great commander, Rabooth, who guarded the temple of Mercury with his three thousand soldiers, shortly afterwards met with the same fate, appealing only to the mercy of his victorious enemy. By the intercession of Gallio, he was pardoned on the following conditions that he should make oath never again to enter into the city of Soriana or attempt anything against his victorious enemy After making a solemn engagement to this effect, he was allowed to go free, and directly took his departure from the city, establishing his residence, with his companions, at Sarbonia, one hundred leagues from Soriana. The Belfioresi then returning in triumphal procession to the grand cloister of Diana, collected the spoils of their adversaries, and carried them afterwards to their palace-master, who appropriated them to the benefit of the community. They next proceeded to witness the execution of the treacherous friends of Saladino, who had entered into terms with Gallio to betray their country, and who now were led forth into the large square to the number of sixty-five, all of whom were quartered alive. Over the heads of the traitor and his sons, whose lives were spared, was written in large letters the result of the invasion in the following manner: "We, the people of Belfiore, have revenged ourselves upon our enemies by turning their arms against themselves; let the traitor Saladino bear witness to this. We send him and his children to you, with his companions, all of whom may be known by the tickets appended to their necks; the rest of the soldiers, for good reasons,

we, the people of Belfiore, think proper to retain. Moreover we decree that in future no native of Soriana shall become resident in our city, or dare to assume the name of a Belfiorese, that he may no longer enjoy the advantage of betraying us, and of turning our hospitality into our ruin."

Along with this fatal proclamation were sent four cartloads filled with the dead bodies of their enemies, which reached about nightfall the gates of Soriana, whose inhabitants were expecting the arrival of their countrymen with a very different escort. Upon the return of the party to Belfiore, a grand tournament, with festivals of every kind, was proclaimed for the people, to be continued during a series of many weeks. Gallio, who had now greatly distinguished himself in the eyes of the Belfioresi, ordered a great feast in honour of the victory, and proceeded with a numerous party to wait upon Patrioni, grand-master of the palace, requesting an assemblage of the chief citizens, to which Marmoreo and his daughter Cardina should be invited. When met together, Gallio entered with a train of friends and nobles, and harangued them in the following words: "My honoured fathers, senators, and chiefs of bands! When I contemplate the singular degree of prudence, fortitude, temperance, and valour with which you have hitherto conducted your affairs, I bow to the decree that rendered me an unhappy exile from my native land. Nor am I here come to question the justice of the proceeding instituted against me by your learned and distinguished citizen, Marmoreo, though I still remain in ignorance of his motives. Rather would I accuse myself in having been so unfortunate as to draw down upon myself the weight of your displeasure; for which I do here humbly entreat your forgiveness, more especially in consideration of my tender age, not presuming to make other defence or set up any better excuse. And so far am I sensible of your high wisdom and authority and of my own slight deserts, that I am here ready to deliver myself up to your judgment once more, as a traitor to my country, and the author of the hateful and sacrilegious plot just attempted by your enemies. True, it was I, and I alone, who brought the whole secret power of Soriana into the bosom of your homes, who induced Saladino, with his fellow-traitors, on whom you had conferred your offices of trust and honour, to league with your foes in this nefarious design, and open to us your gates, that we might bring you under the yoke of Soriana, from which you are now fortunately for ever free. And let me caution you, before I yield my forfeit life, never in future to commit offices of trust or the command of gates to the Soriani, or to any other foreigners upon the face of the earth. It is enough to grant them passports through your dominions, but to make them governors over gates and citadels is the height of infatuation; for the love of country never becomes entirely obliterated from the human breast. Now, as the unhappy cause of the great evil that had so nearly befallen the state, I surrender my person into your hands, entreating only, with my dying prayers, that the glory and triumph of our last noble enterprise may be wholly attributed to the youthful and beauteous Cardina, whose many virtues have produced, by their influence

over my soul, the present happy result. It was she who snatched the patricidal sword out of my hand, who, when I was bent on the irretrievable destruction of her father and her friends, stood between us, like a guardian angel of peace, and with her tender and sorrowful aspect, her passionate tears, and sweet appeals to my love and honour, restored me to higher and better thoughts, pointing out to me the path of patriotic duty that I have since pursued. If, then, death be due to me as a traitor, to her let triumphal arches and honours befitting a queen be afforded; let her praises be sung over my obsequies, let her be called the saviour of Belfiore, and soothe my wounded spirit ere it take its final flight!" Here Gallio became silent, and kneeling in the midst of the council, he raised his hands, as if in prayer, while his eyes were bent upon the ground, and awaited in this attitude his sentence. The chiefs and elders of the city, imagining that Gallio would have closed his harangue by soliciting honours and rewards for his great services, having risen by his last exploit high in the estimation of all ranks, were surprised at such proofs of unfeigned humility and contrition, and began to consider him in a still nobler point of view than before. Mingled tears, congratulations, and applause followed the conclusion of his address. But the emotions of Cardina and her father, the author of all Gallio's sufferings, far surpassed those of any others present the lady's tears flowed passionately and uncontrolled; her sobs drowned her voice when she attempted to intercede for him; while the more silent but deep and painful struggles of her father, torn as he was by the sense of ingratitude and remorse, produced a sensation of awe and trouble throughout the assembly. It was evident that the lovers had long been attached to each other; that he must have opposed their union by the most cruel and unjustifiable measures, and a feeling of compassion for both soon communicated itself to the people, who rushing forward with wild and tumultuous cries, demanded the head of Marmoreo, and declared Gallio their liege lord and prince. The chiefs and elders, yielding to the popular commotion, rose from their seats, and deputing one of their members to bear the ensigns of authority, they placed the gold staff in the hands of their new master. After a due degree of modest refusal and deference to the superior claims of the aged senators, Gallio was induced to accept the government of the state, and mounting the sovereign tribunal, in an harangue to the people expressed his gratitude for the high trust reposed in him. The people then becoming acquainted with his attachment to the Lady Cardina, unanimously insisted upon her taking her place as his bride-elect at his side, the sole condition upon which they consented to spare the life of the treacherous and cruel Marmoreo. The nuptials were accordingly soon after solemnised in the most splendid manner, followed by every variety of games and jousts, and such exhibitions as were best adapted to gratify the taste of the people. Wherever Gallio made his appearance he was welcomed with the most enthusiastic shouts of applause as the beloved sovereign of his people; and he long continued lord of Belfiore, blest in the affections of the wise and beautiful Cardina, and esteemed for his equal administration of the laws. The season of these joyous festivals

being over, it was resolved in council that the dungeons of Sabar should be blocked up on all sides, with the six thousand Sorian soldiers enclosed within, all of whom thus miserably perished. A herald was next despatched to summon the city of Soriana, which was soon compelled to send in its submission to Gallio, and was annexed to his dominions.

NOVELLA VIII.

IN the province of Soria there once flourished two rival chiefs, one of whom was named Alvigi, Count of Monforte, the other the Marquis Sivero, lord of a rich city called Belvaso, whose domains were situated within two days' march of each other. Having long tried their respective skill and valour, with various fortune, against each other, Alvigi at length took up a position close to Belvaso, which he frequently attacked with fury. The Marquis, on his part, made several desperate assaults upon his enemy's camp, which he found, however, so strongly entrenched, that one day, after a severe action, his troops were put to flight and he himself slain upon the field. On the ensuing day his castle and dominions fell into the hands of the conqueror, who believing he had taken ample revenge for past injuries, and using his victory with moderation, received the inhabitants of Belvaso into the ranks of his faithful subjects, declaring that all cause of enmity had ceased with the death of the Marquis, and that his sole wish was to render them happy under their new government. Grateful for this kind treatment, the Belvasesi submitted quietly to his sway, and he admitted them to the same privileges as were enjoyed by the subjects of his own state. A season of peace and prosperity followed, interrupted only by occasional feuds between the chief citizens, the most serious of which arose out of the jealousy of two named Macidonio and Cherubino. The former was at the head of one of the richest families in Belvaso, extremely proud, and envious of the authority of his compeers, while Cherubino was a man held in high esteem for his valour and fidelity, and possessed of considerable reputation and influence. Exasperated at the superior confidence reposed in him, Macidonio resolved to make use of every art to banish him from the capital, being fully bent upon ruining him or perishing in the attempt. For this purpose he began gradually to infuse suspicions of his fidelity into the Count's mind, availing himself of the arts of one of his kinsmen named Savojetto, originally from Belvaso, though his family had become naturalised in Monforte. He it was who, possessing the private ear of Count Alvigi, consented to ruin Cherubino in his master's favour, by insinuating that he had been dissatisfied with his government ever since the loss of his late master, the Marquis Sivero, whose device he even yet carried; and as he was known to possess great influence and courage, he might render himself extremely formidable in case of any popular commotion. In this way he continued to insinuate doubts of the noble Cherubino into the mind of the Count, until the latter, alarmed

ard incensed at what he heard, despatched a messenger for him. Aware of the plot that had been concerted between Macidonio and Savojetto, and certain of encountering the anger of his lord, he nevertheless determined to obey, conscious of his perfect innocence, and despising the intrigues of his enemies. These last, dreading lest he should be able to answer their calumnies, and retort the charges upon themselves, anxiously spread abroad reports that the Count, in great indignation, had resolved to sacrifice him to the offended laws of his country. So far, however, from deterring him from appearing, these rumours added to his desire of meeting his calumniators, and summoning his four sons to attend him, they speedily mounted horse, and arrived the next day at Monforte. They rode directly to the palace, and requested the master to obtain an interview for them as soon as possible. Without waiting, therefore, to refresh themselves, they attended the summons to council, where Cherubino, kneeling with his sons before the Count with much humility and reverence, requested to know his commands. "Ah!" cried the Count, in a tone of surprise, "is it indeed Cherubino?—the last man whom I should have expected to behold here. Still you are welcome; but you look fatigued with your long ride. And your fine boys here too! This is passing strange; but take a little repose; you shall hear further from us to-morrow." To this, Cherubino, in the most open yet respectful manner replied, "Speak not, my noble lord, of weariness in your service; show in what way I can promote your honour or your authority, and I will not be found the last in the race of duty or valorous achievement. I only now crave that here, in your illustrious council, before the judge from whom I ought to expect my sentence, I may plead in my own defence; for I am too well aware that reports have been industriously circulated highly injurious to my character, and that the authors of them, whom I know, in order to intimidate me, and render me still more guilty in your eyes, threatened me with death if I dared to appear in your presence. But this has brought me only the sooner to your feet; let them attempt to disgrace me as they will, I have served you faithfully, and I will hear my sentence from your own lips, as I was accustomed to appeal face to face against my enemies before my late lord and master. It is said, indeed, that because I served him faithfully, I must prove a traitor to you, and there are those here who wish to persuade you of it, out of secret malice and revenge. True it is that the Marquis Sivero always found loyal followers both in my father and myself, for we never served other master, and he never abused his authority so as to give us any cause of just complaint. To him we owe the fortunes of our house; he honoured and promoted me, intrusted me with his secret councils, and I can do no less than respect his memory, as I should not otherwise be worthy of receiving a benefit from any future master, but rather of his severest reprehension, suspicion, and contempt. And as it has at length pleased Heaven to render you, by rightful conquest, the lord and master to whom I owe allegiance since the death of my late honoured chief, so I shall never be found wanting in devotion and fidelity to your service; and the more that, tracing my origin to

Monforte, and from the house of Liona, I may now consider myself restored to my native land." And having clearly proved to the Count's satisfaction that such was the real truth, the latter began to regard both him and his sons with a more auspicious aspect, and, acknowledging the frankness with which he spoke, he turned to his accusers, and in particular to Savojetto, who had already frequently attempted to interrupt the accused, and who now, addressing the Count, maintained that it would be a sufficient answer to point to the device of the Marquis Sivero which was still borne by the treacherous Cherubino, a sufficient proof of his sentiments But Cherubino, here feigning entire ignorance of the person of Savojetto, who had been bribed to make these charges, with an air of indifference inquired his name, and receiving an answer from Savojetto, he continued, "Why, sir, it is one thing to carry the device of our leader upon our arms, and another to bear it stamped upon our hearts. Now tell me, Savojetto, whether do you think it a fouler wrong to betray a master who has heaped riches and honours upon you, or, like me, who bear equal rank with the Marquis, to prove faithful and loyal to him while he lived?" To this his calumniator replied, "You are very bold thus to defend the character of that arch-traitor, Sivero; but I should consider myself as a still more detestable villain were I capable of harbouring a thought against the honour or dignity of my liege Lord, Alvigi, whose presence you thus outrage with your indecent praises of his bitterest foe." "We war not with the dead!" was the reply of Cherubino, as he turned from him, with an air of contempt, towards the lord Alvigi, adding, with the same open and unembarrassed mien, "As you have justly given me free license to defend myself, I shall now avail myself of it, as my calumniator has thus challenged me to the trial to prove that, of the two, I am the most loyal subject, and that Savojetto is only a creature in the hands of Macidonio, bribed to rob me of my honour, if not of my life." The Count, with one of his most angry frowns, here interrupting him, exclaimed, "How say you, Cherubino? Take heed of your safety, and prove your words good, or your head is not long your own" "Cast it, then, at the feet of my enemies," replied Cherubino, "if I fix not the name of traitor upon my accuser. This Savojetto possesses your confidence; I know he is originally from Belvaso, of the family of Sanguigni, and related to his friend Macidonio. During the late war he was one of your council, the whole of whose deliberations he communicated to Macidonio, by which we were long enabled to counteract all your plans, your open attacks and secret ambushes, in such a manner as frequently to give us the advantage. Let him attempt to deny this as he will, I have here a letter signed by his own hand, informing our party, ten days before, of your intention to burn the city gate in your attack upon the first day of April, while, at the same time you would attempt to carry the place by assault, employing, moreover, a hundred miners for the purpose of blowing up our citadel. This precious document falling, as chance would have it, into my hands, I have kept it secret in order to spare the author until the present time Still you may recollect of what essential service it was to us, for when you

assaulted our gates, you found them converted into iron, and so stoutly defended, that you were that morning compelled to retreat with loss. You met with the same kind of reception from us, and owing to the same cause, at the fort; insomuch that we might consider the traitor Savojetto as the author of many of our victories and of your reverses." At the same time he handed the proofs of his treason to the Count, adding that it was now become his duty to acquaint him, as his liege lord, with every secret of state The same motives that led him to observe the utmost fidelity to his former master now actuated him in regard to the honour and safety of Alvigi, having been restored to his native place and received into the service of a valiant and gracious prince. Here Cherubino ceased, and the dark frown was observed to gather on the brow of Count Alvigi. Savojetto attempted in vain to defend himself; he ventured not to encounter the eye of his master, and his confusion and detection being but too evident, he was ordered into custody, while the Count sent a fresh summons for Macidonio. On his arrival he thus addressed him: "I wish not to reproach you, Macidonio, for your fidelity to your late lord and master; on the contrary, I greatly applaud you for your exertions in his favour. Therefore, I forgave all the past injuries I had suffered at your hands. I gave your city the same privileges and advantages as were enjoyed by my own subjects; and you have yourself no reason to consider me in the light of a conqueror or of a harsh master Why, then, have you conspired against an innocent man? Why attempted, by the foulest arts, to ruin the noble Cherubino in my favour? Since you found your hands and your tongue such ready instruments of offence against your noble countryman, since you attempted with them to deprive him of his life and honour, let them suffer the penalty due to such a crime."

The Count then sentenced him to lose his hands and tongue by the public executioner, as a lasting proof of perfidy and ingratitude in bearing false witness and suborning others against the honour of his compeer, his fellow-countryman and his neighbour. Turning next towards his colleague Savojetto, he continued. "As for thee, thou basest and most perfidious of villains, thou whom I have loaded with riches and honours, and called by the familiar names of counsellor, companion, and friend, while thou hast repeatedly perjured thy soul with a thousand false oaths of loyalty and truth; tell me what species of death, what thousand tortures are enough to expiate thy black ingratitude? The justice upon thy head, however inadequate, shall at least be retributive" And forthwith the Count summoned together all the surviving relatives of those whom the arch-traitor had basely betrayed to death in the attacks upon the gate and citadel of Belvaso. Seizing upon the body of Savojetto with the insatiate thirst of revenge, they bound him alive to a column and made him a mark to shoot at for their amusement. They next proceeded to hang, to draw, and quarter him, dividing his limbs between the different gates of Monforte, while they placed his head upon the walls of the great palace, on the sides of which were ordered to be erected two marble pillars. On one of these was engraved the number of honours and benefits

lavished upon the traitor Savojetto, while the other was painted red to denote his family name of Sanguigna, tracing its origin to Belvaso, and on this was written the amount of all the treason and ingratitude received from him in return by the noble Count, with the loss attending it. In the middle of the chain, suspended between the two columns, was seen the head of the culprit, fixed in such a way that no one could either reach or remove it; and the columns were so situated that none of the members belonging to the Count's council could pass and repass to their hall without being reminded of their duty by going under them. The possessions of Savojetto were next distributed among the persons who had revenged their slaughtered relatives upon the body of their cruel enemy; and shortly afterwards fourteen of his fellow-traitors and conspirators were discovered and executed in the city of Monforte.

When this impressive tragedy was concluded, the Count, turning towards the noble Cherubino, with a joyous countenance said, "Now, my good and faithful servant, the fruits of thy worth and fidelity are seen. Having happily rid my dominions of traitors, do thou, my friend, receive all the honours and privileges which they enjoyed, and take thy seat at my right hand."

Novels of Giovanni Brevio.

GIOVANNI BREVIO.



THE tales attributed to this novelist are by no means so abundant as those of most of his contemporaries, consisting only of six, out of which a still smaller number has been found adapted to the present purpose. Giovanni Brevio was by birth a Venetian, and a canon of Ceneda, under which title he is frequently mentioned by different authors as having visited Rome in the year 1545; a circumstance which marks with sufficient precision the period in which he flourished. The additional particulars of this author's life are extremely scanty. It is merely known that he had an uncle, auditor of Rota and bishop of Ceneda, which may account for the ecclesiastical office enjoyed by himself, and for his attendance at Rome in 1545; some doubts having been entertained whether he was indeed the same Giovanni whose presence there at that period is noticed by contemporary writers. He is said to have been a respectable poet as well as a novelist, and produced many beautiful pieces adapted for Italian music.

From one of his sonnets, addressed to his friend Luca Bonfio, we learn that, wearied with his residence at Rome, he sighed for the enjoyment of a more peaceful and pleasant life among the Euganean hills, not far from Padua On this subject he observes at the close —

"Quanto t'invidio, O mio fedele e caro,
La dolce vita d'ogni cura sciolta,
Di che a me sempre il ciel fu tanto avaro"

'How much, dear friend, I envy thee that sweet
And quiet life, from every turmoil free,
Which my sad fate hath still denied to me"

Under these circumstances, he consoled himself by writing an express treatise on the "Vita Tranquilla," that tranquil life the possession of which he appears to have so much envied in his friend. It was published, together with his tales and poems, at Rome, in the year 1545. in one volume octavo.

He was intimate with most of the celebrated wits and scholars of his day, and in particular with the poet and courtier Berni, one of the most spirited and amusing writers of the time Although the language of Brevio can boast neither the ease nor clearness of some of the earlier novelists, and is strongly tinctured with the prevailing dialect of his native district, he is nevertheless to be enumerated, in other points, among the happiest and most ingenious writers of his age. His stories are in general told with considerable ease and vivacity

of manner, and the incidents are arranged in a way well calculated to interest the attention of his readers.

The second novel of the series is a story of a priest, who, by forging his own letters of recommendation, passes for a cardinal, and is entertained as such by the persons on whom he imposed them. This, with the third novel, will be found in the following selection, the last of which has been more than once imitated by the dramatists of different countries. It is the subject of Piron's comedy of "Les Fils Ingrats," entitled also "L'Ecole des Pères," which was played in 1728, about the period of the introduction of the "Comédie Larmoyante." It likewise forms one of the "Pieuse Récréations" of Angelin Gazée, and one of the "Colloquia Mensalia" of Luther, where it is mentioned, among other examples, as a warning to those fond fathers who distribute their property during their lifetime among their children; "a practice," observes Mr. Dunlop,[1] "to which they are in general little addicted."

"The fourth novel," continues Mr. Dunlop, "is the renowned tale of Belfagor. This story, with merely a difference of names, was originally told in an old Latin MS, which is now lost, but which, till the period of the civil wars in France, remained in the library of St. Martin de Tours. But whether Brevio or Machiavel first exhibited the tale in an Italian garb has been a matter of dispute among the critics of their country. It was printed by Brevio during his life and under his own name in 1545, and with the name of Machiavel in 1549, which was about eighteen years after the death of that historian. Both writers probably borrowed the incidents from the Latin MS, for they could scarcely have copied from each other. The story is besides in the 'Nights' of Straparola, but much mutilated, and has also been imitated by Fontaine."

NOVELLA II.

THERE was formerly a priest of Piperno, named Antonio, but ill deserving of the sacred character, inasmuch as from his earliest youth he evinced a decided disposition to defraud and to impose upon the unwary, which he effected in a variety of ways. Having occasion once to leave Piperno, he repaired to Naples, and it there occurred to him to put into practice one of the happiest tricks he had ever invented, for which purpose he made preparations to depart for Rome. Before taking his leave of Naples, he entreated Angelo Romano, who had long resided there, to furnish him with a letter of introduction to his brother Luca, a saddler, living at Rome, in order that he might pay some little attentions to him, a request with which Romano immediately complied. Having accordingly obtained the letter, he proceeded on his way, and on approaching Rome, began to examine its contents. Imagining that it was wanting in warmth of recommendation and encomium, he thought it most advisable to compose another in its place, which he soon produced in a very happy imitation of the hand

[1] History of Fiction, vol ii. p 411.

of Angelo, to the following tenor.—"Dear brother Luca! You will receive this from the hands of his Excellency, a very kind patron of mine, who is now for certain important reasons travelling incognito, on some very urgent affairs, into France. He is a noble prelate, holding several rich benefices, and the superior of many monasteries in the Cremonese, as well as in Avignon: though I do not just at present recollect the name of his see. You will, therefore, take care, for your own sake, to show him every possible respect and attention, when perhaps you may be happy enough to induce him to take up his residence at your house while he remains at Rome. He brings with him only two servants, but more will shortly follow from this place, as well as from Cremona and Piacenza. He will stay in Rome during some days, and you must dispose of the horses as you can best contrive. Should you not be in a situation from your late losses to treat him in a manner worthy of his rank, I would advise you to mortgage everything you possess to show your wish to please him, as you may depend upon it you will find your interest in so doing. Not that he himself stands in need of such a reception, for would to Heaven our whole fortune equalled what he carries along with him, but the truth is you will find your account in it. You know the old saying, 'It is well to bait with a little fish to catch a great one.' (E buono gettar una sardella per prendere un luccio.) He knows you are one of my family, and that you have a fine boy about fifteen years old, whom he told me he should be very glad to bring forward in the world. He will not fail to be of use to us in our difficulties, for he is certainly well inclined towards us. At least your Marc Antonio will come in for one of his benefices. This distinguished prelate has already resided above three weeks at my house, and is quite sensible of the services I have, during the whole of that time, rendered him."

Having fabricated this masterpiece of rhetoric, he arrived about twilight near the Piazza Giudea, where he sold one of his old mantles to a certain Jew, and with the proceeds of his ancient suit purchased an embroidered shirt, which he threw over him without any further dress, the better to carry his design into execution. For had he ventured to make his appearance in his own coarse habiliments, the imposition would have been discovered in a moment. Now, however, he advanced with confidence, as it was night, towards the residence of Luca, to whom, finding him at home, he delivered the letter. Luca had scarcely perused it, when the bishop began to tell a dreadful story of his having been set upon and robbed by banditti, who had slain his two servants, endeavouring to defend their master, while he had with difficulty escaped. His appearance, no less than the letter, certainly verified his assertion. Observing his forlorn condition, Luca, in a compassionate tone, addressed him: "My lord, your Excellency is very welcome," to which his reverence replied, "Do not, friend, give me any titles, but simply call me cardinal; my name is Adriano;" imposing on the credulity of the saddler that he was the cardinal of that name who had travelled into Turkey. Reassured by the tone of the feigned cardinal, his host now lavished upon him every attention in his power, saying, "You do me honour, cardinal, to take

up your residence in my poor house, where you may rely upon us all as being wholly devoted to your service. Poor as it is, you must, therefore, consider my house as your own, and I am only concerned to think that since the sack of this noble city I do not find myself in circumstances to offer you a more splendid reception. But I trust my best efforts will not be wanting to supply those deficiencies which I am aware your Excellency must perceive, if your infinite goodness will deign, as my brother flatters me you will, to accept my attentions." His grace here returned his thanks in the most condescending manner, though he still sat with a somewhat serious and sombre countenance; on which Luca respectfully ventured to throw one of his best cloaks over his reverend shoulders, cherishing the vital warmth until such time as a hot supper and a warm chamber could be prepared for him. For this laudable purpose he gave up his own room, into which, when the cardinal had finished his supper, he was respectfully shown by the lady of the house herself. A bath was then ordered for the good cardinal's feet, with all kinds of sweet ointments and herbs, together with a flagon of Greek wine to invite him to repose.

The next morning our happy tradesman's first visit was to his tailor's, whom he took along with him to a draper's shop, where he purchased eight ells of fine cloth, part of which he paid for on the spot A cassock and a large embroidered mantle were immediately presented to his reverence, and as his host imagined that his bed was not good enough for him, he ordered two new feather beds, with fine sheets and hangings, while his chamber was likewise elegantly furnished and fresh perfumed. His Excellency was thus as greatly honoured as if he had been a real cardinal, his table was heaped with all those delicacies of the season which only distinguished prelates have a right to eat, and for the first few days they were truly relished by his lordship, who made great havoc both among the solids and the sweets Still his host imagined that something was wanting in the treatment due to his guest's singular magnificence and worth. He therefore summoned his friends and relatives, engaged in various trades, to assist him in his hospitable views; and the hosier, the tailor, and the shoemaker, were soon laid under contribution. He invited them to his house, saying, "Make haste, friends, make haste, the hour is come for pushing all our fortunes; we shall soon be the richest family in the place; no more stitching of bridles and saddles for me!" They inquired, in the greatest astonishment, what had happened; but the happy tradesman was so overpowered with joy at the reflection that he was the host of the lord bishop, that he only laughed and looked proudly round him, hardly deigning to reply. But on being pressed more closely, with an air of affected humility he observed: "Why, gentlemen, if you will have it, there is a very distinguished prelate residing in my house at present; and I am very happy to see him, and always shall be: that is all He is desirous of bestowing one of his benefices on a son of mine, and my brother also writes to me about it. Indeed, he introduced him to me." So confident did the poor tradesman appear, that all his relations agreed with him, and determined also, on their part, to show every kind of respect to the venerable pre-

late. More than a dozen of them assembled together, among whom was the host's sister-in-law, named Antonia, who, on hearing of her brother's vast expectations, brought her son Gioanni with her, a youth who had been adopted into the family of Lattanzio, a Neapolitan, and treated as his own son. But his fond mother had now brighter prospects for him, and ordering him home, proceeded to offer his services to the cardinal, at whose feet she humbly knelt. The whole party, indeed, lavished upon him all those ceremonies and attentions due only to persons of the highest quality, and he was treated with beccaficos in season, and with every kind of poultry, game, pastry, and ragouts. Even the marmalade was of the finest, which appeared after dinner, and his toothpick is said to have been presented to him in a cover, accompanied with wines of the best and finest quality to be found in all the city of Rome. It is likewise reported that the celebrated cook in the service of the friars of Santa Matelica was the very man who was sent for to prepare the bishop's meals, under the superintendence of Catella, the wife of our honest tradesman. Here, then, did the worthy prelate feast like a wolf in the sheepfold, rejoicing the host and his good friends and family with his saintly and benignant looks. After spending a joyous time, he began to think, as he had long flattered the ambitious hopes of his host and his brother-in-law in vain, it would be well to follow up his plan with another master-stroke of his art; for in fact the wretched tradesman was now on the point of ruin. In order to drain his last resources, the cardinal began to feign himself sick, and fairly took to his bed for more than ten days, pretending at first to refuse all nourishment, though he yielded at the same time to his strong desire for drink. Feverish as he was, however, he contrived to devour as much as a man in health, obstinately refusing to see a physician, protesting that everything was in the hands of God, and that, in fact, he was much better than he deserved to be. He was, in truth, afraid that, if tried by the aphorisms of Hippocrates, the language of his pulse with his voice and looks might convict him of his foul deceit. Requesting, therefore, that a notary might instantly be sent for, he showed an extreme desire to settle his last accounts, purposing to dispose of a vast property, which could be no loss to himself, in favour of his hospitable host and his friends. He provided for Marc Antonio, the son of Luca the saddler, by a bequest of his rich bishopric of Montpelier in France, and to Gioanni, the son of the sister-in-law, he bequeathed the rectory of San Simpliciano in the Cremonese. But to Luca the saddler himself he left a thousand ducats, with only five hundred to his brother-in-law, Bastiano, as he had to remember at the same time many of his surrounding friends in different legacies, to be paid out of the proceeds of his benefices and other possessions lying within the districts of Cremona and Piacenza. While he was thus pronouncing his last will and testament with a feeble and trembling voice, his cardinal's cap being drawn quite over his eyes, and holding, as it were, his soul between his teeth to keep it from taking wing until he had settled his affairs, "I do not wish," he continued, "to abate a jot of the liberality which my great and magnanimous ancestors have always shown to

their dying day. I would have you, therefore, Mr. Notary, write down that I add to the former thousand five hundred more ducats in behalf of Signor Luca, the saddler;" whose joy, and that of the whole family, on hearing his beneficent intentions, became quite inexpressible. The reverend father now thought fit to recover very rapidly, which convinced his new friends that he had an excellent constitution; and as the time was fast approaching when he intended to depart from Rome, accompanied by some of these simple people, into France, in order to confirm them in their credulity, he ordered a large house to be taken for him in Rome to receive him on his return. This was directly done, and very well furnished with all that was befitting a man of rank, being the next house to that which formerly belonged to Melchior Barlasina. The wife of Luca, in the idea that her son, Marc Antonio, would soon be made a bishop, a hat becoming such an office having been already, by the cardinal's advice, procured, presented four handsome rings, all she had in the world, to be worn by his reverence, as a slight token of her gratitude for his patronage of her son Her sister Antonia likewise, in consideration of the rectory given to her boy, Gioanni, presented him with four fine cambric shirts, and several pair of rich embroidered stockings. And though these were but insignificant proofs of their sense of the high worth and dignity of his Excellency, he nevertheless deigned to accept them without the least symptom of pride or haughtiness Nor was this the extent of the poor infatuated tradesman's folly; for just before the departure of his reverence he sold a fine vine in his possession at San Bastiano for two hundred ducats, though it was well worth three hundred, to show his gratitude for the cardinal's will.

But Providence, which soon or late is sure to bring the greatest iniquities to light, revealed on this occasion the daring imposition practised by this wretch in the following manner. The sister-in-law of Luca had, as was before stated, recommended her son to the patronage of the mock cardinal, withdrawing him from the care of his former friend, who was much displeased at such a step, on account of the great pains which had been bestowed in his education. So far was he incensed by such ungrateful conduct, that he was resolved to obtain redress. He frequently sent to his mother, Antonia, to learn what had become of him, who, professing great sorrow at his absence, replied that he had not lately called at her house. He then went in search of him, half afraid lest the soldiers, of which the place was full, had led him astray, as he was a tall and pleasing youth, well fitted to become one of their body. And it so happened that this youth, Gioanni, and his master, Lattanzio, encountered each other upon the bridge, as the boy was hastening to purchase fruits for the lord cardinal. Lattanzio immediately cried, "Come here, you little glutton! What are you doing, and why have you run away from me?" The boy replied, "Because my mother has found me a situation with a great lord, who is staying in the house of Luca the saddler, near the palace of Sienna." His master then tried to persuade him to return home with him, when the youth took to his heels and left him; on which Lattanzio immediately went in person to the house of Antonia to upbraid her with her

strange and ungrateful conduct. "You appeared to have been satisfied," he continued, "with the kindness I showed your son, having treated him always as if he had been one of the family. And who is this person residing at present with your brother-in-law, who seems to have deprived me of the boy's affection? Let him be sent back to me instantly, for I am determined it shall be done."

Having no better excuse to make, the lady replied that she knew nothing about the matter; and then turned her back upon him with an air of disdain, believing that Gioanna was secure of the cardinal's good graces, and that Lattanzio might easily provide himself with another apprentice. She expected, too, that her son would make her little presents out of the proceeds of his rectory, of such ornaments and dresses as would be very agreeable to her. Further incensed by this repulse, Lattanzio had recourse the same evening to the assistance of a magistrate, just as the impostor was preparing to set out from Rome with the tradesman and his associates. Without any knowledge of the real particulars, he stated, very truly, that there resided at the house of Luca a man of extremely bad character, and one of the greatest cheats upon the face of the earth. In consequence of this timely representation, the police were ordered to pay a visit to the tradesman's house, where they found the cardinal on the point of setting out; four horses standing saddled at the door, the best of which was for the cardinal's own person, and the other three for his companions, who were now carried, with their patron, to the prison of Tor di Nona. Luca was first of all interrogated by the magistrate as to the business of the said impostor at his house, and whither they were going together. To this the poor tradesman replied that his brother had written to him very fully from Naples, warmly recommending his lordship, whom, had they better known, they would not, perhaps, have ventured to use so unceremoniously as they had done. The magistrate then commanded him to produce the letter, and detecting the forgery, from the affectation and bombast of its style, he ordered the cardinal to be put to the question, in order to obtain clear information as to his designs and character. Having an extreme aversion to the honour of martyrdom, and being an experienced old rogue, he instantly confessed the manner in which he had counterfeited the real letter, as well as the whole series of impostures he had since practised on this credulous family. He even developed his future plans of installing the son in his clerical office, of carrying them to visit his bishopric through Montpelier and into France, where he intended likewise to ordain Marc Antonio, flattering them with the hope of receiving immense fortunes, while they continued to lavish upon him the whole of their remaining substance; and as they journeyed from place to place, he intended to weave new plots to impose upon them and their companions.

On hearing this, the judge immediately ordered his poor victims to be liberated, first inquiring of them the particulars of the lord bishop's conduct when he arrived at their house; and he was shocked to hear how he had come among them quite destitute, the grave solemnity with which he had presented the letter, his continual feasting, the

dignified importance with which he commanded their services, ordering his toothpick case to be brought in a cover, leaving his abode only in the morning and the evening under pretence of going to mass, and entreating his host to call him simply by the name of Adriano, meaning to represent himself as Cardinal Adriano, at that time leaving Rome. But when the narrator came to the story of the will, with all the items and particulars of his legacies, the judge and the whole court were convulsed with laughter. Then there was the cassock, the gold rings presented to him by the lady, the young cardinal's hat prepared for Marc Antonio, and the fine embroidered shirts, set down to the account of the young Gioanni's rectory. Most of the stolen goods were recovered, rather by good fortune than by any sort of prudence on the part of the family, his Excellency not being now in a situation to lay his hands upon them, though they waited, ready packed at the door, to be transported to another country The rings, however, were gone, and it was in vain that the poor lady urged her claims before the magistrate ; the rogue, steadfast as a tower, denied all knowledge of them, and she was compelled to submit patiently to her fate, especially as the cardinal swore to it in so solemn a manner. Having at length heard the whole cause, the judge pronounced his sentence, and the lord cardinal was condemned to have his ears cut off on the next Saturday morning, and to be well scourged ; while Luca the saddler was sentenced to re-open his shop and renew his labours on bridles and saddles ; and his brother-in-law, Bastiano the shoemaker, to return to his last. Lattanzio was directed to seize upon his apprentice, Gioanni ; and Marc Antonio, as not yet being of an age to assume the duties of his bishopric, was compelled to wait until he should arrive at years of discretion.

NOVELLA III.

THERE resided not very long ago in Pavia one Messer Antonio de' Torelli, a fine old gentleman, who is still affectionately remembered by several of the more aged citizens of the place. When he began to feel himself gradually declining, some time before the termination of his mortal career, he resolved, out of regard to his three sons, whom he had already settled advantageously in life, to adjust his affairs for the last time, and distribute his property amongst them. Summoning them for this purpose to his presence, he said : "You see, my dear boys, I am beginning to grow old ; am I not ? At least I cannot hope to survive many years ; and it will be a consolation no less to you than to myself, while I am here, to put your affairs into a little better train. I intend to give you equal shares, inasmuch as you are entitled to them, and to do this now instead of putting it off from day to day until the very last moment." So he forthwith proceeded to give away both houses and lands, besides all his personal property, in equal shares to his children, not sparing even the ready money in his bureau, consisting of six thousand ducats, which he now divided

amongst his sons, saying, "You will take notice, boys, that it is nothing but my affection for you, together with my old age, which begins to affect my judgment, that leads me to settle these matters at present. For I should be sorry to be like those avaricious old fathers who are so jealous of their authority, that the longer they live the more they would have, ambitious of domineering and managing everything their own way till the very last. They retain their hold upon the things of this world with as tenacious a grasp as if they really never intended to relax it, and instead of giving themselves any repose, they labour still harder to accumulate treasures which they can never enjoy Instead of imitating so foolish an example, I will relinquish my property and my cares with a good grace, and I will continue to live joyously among you, as long as Heaven shall permit, feeling assured that you will all take pleasure in supplying me with more than I shall ever require."

His sons vied with each other in expressing their gratitude for his paternal goodness, declaring that they should merely consider themselves in the place of his stewards, ever prepared to attend to his minutest wishes in every respect. Yet it so turned out, that in a very few months after the good old gentleman had parted with his property, their demeanour towards him began to alter. And this he shortly perceived when he began to take up his residence first with one and then with another, believing that he could not fail to enjoy himself exceedingly. After continuing tolerably comfortable with them for a little while, he began to be aware that in proportion as he lengthened his visits they seemed to become less agreeable. This he more particularly noticed was the opinion of his three daughters-in-law, some of whom were not unfrequently heard to exclaim, "Look! look! here is that vexatious old man again! come to dine with us, too, at such an inconvenient hour!" While others would say, "There is really no pleasing him; the soup is always seasoned either too high or too low; indeed he is getting very old and very odd." So frequent and so loud did these murmurs at length become, that he could not avoid overhearing them; and even the servants soon convinced him of the error he had committed in enriching his children during his lifetime at his own expense. Not very well pleased at having made this discovery, he determined to apply, in order to relieve his anxiety, to Angelo Beccaria, one of his oldest friends, to whom, in a doleful voice, he said, "You are aware, my dear friend, that about six months ago I got a foolish notion into my head of making my will, which I still more foolishly executed in favour of my sons. Now, you would not believe, my dear Angelo, in what an ungrateful, in what a cruel way, they, and especially their wives, have since treated me. I thought that they would be a thousand times kinder to me than ever, after leaving them all I was worth during my lifetime, instead of making them wait till I was fairly gone. I imagined that they would all be attentive and obliging to me, and, would you believe it, it has turned out just the contrary. I wish, from my very soul, that I had retained my property, for my children, and especially their wives, look as if they could hardly bear the sight of me. Now, I would not breathe a word of this to any one living but yourself.

You were always kind to me, and it is a great relief to my feelings to have some one, at least, in whom to confide." His friend Angelo endeavoured to console him, saying that he was extremely sorry to hear of such unfilial conduct on the part of his children, when they ought rather to have shown him increased tenderness and respect, after bestowing the whole of his fortune on them and their families. He then paused, as if considering what could possibly be done. After ruminating for some time, "I have it! I have it! my dear Antonio," he cried. "If you will follow my advice, you may be a happy man yet. Now, listen! Suppose I were to lend you two thousand ducats, which you shall take home with you immediately, and return them to me in a few days. You may show them in the meanwhile to your sons, to convince them that they are in your possession, stating that you mean to leave them to whomsoever you may judge proper. Their avarice will so far weigh with them as to induce them to show you that attention and dutiful behaviour which all your kindness has failed to produce." Accepting the proposal with his warmest thanks, Messer Antonio instantly received from his friend's hands the two thousand ducats, and having counted and given his note for them, he carried them joyfully along with him home.

In pursuance of his friend's advice, he then sent for Galeazzo, his eldest son, to whom he said, "You are aware, my son, that though I still may have many years to live, I not long since made over the greatest part of my property to you and your brothers, yet I did not dispose of the whole, for that would have been a foolish thing indeed; though I only reserved a few thousands, not to leave myself quite destitute, as you may here behold." He then exhibited his friend's gold, giving his eldest son at the same time to understand that, should all continue pleasant between them, he intended to add them to the sum he had before bestowed upon him.

Dismissing Galeazzo, he then went through the same scene with his two brothers, making the same promises to each Nor was it long before he reaped the benefit of this happy expedient, as he had the pleasure of observing a great change for the better in the conduct of his children. On returning the money to his friend Angelo, he again expressed his gratitude for the ingenious suggestion, observing that he had now nothing further to complain of, and that he was a very happy father, inasmuch as his sons already began to vie with each other in their kindness and attentions to him.

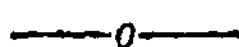
Not very long after, the old gentleman feeling himself beginning to decline apace, experienced the advantage of his good friend's advice; for no children could be more attentive to the least wants and wishes of a parent. However much pressed, he still delayed to make his final will; and not satisfied with this, he further resolved to reproach his children for their late conduct by another ingenious device. In the very same chest which had contained the six thousand ducats he deposited a heap of sand, on the surface of which he laid an oaken staff, with an inscription, in very plain terms, to the following purport:—

"I will and bequeath this cudgel to knock any old fool upon the head who gives away his own property during his lifetime."

In a few days afterwards, this kind old father breathed his last, when his sons severally hastened to inspect the strong box which he had previously shown to each; and so eager and simultaneous were they in their motions, that they all three met together on the spot, where they stood gazing for some time wistfully at each other. The eldest first broke silence, saying, "It is now several months ago since my father presented me with a bag of gold, containing, as he said, two thousand ducats, which he deposited here for me. I doubt not they are in this box, and I am now come here to claim them." At these words, his brothers, Antonio and Julio, each exclaimed, "It may be very true, Galeazzo, but he promised exactly the same sum to me." Each asked the others for the key, and maintaining the truth of their several assertions, they entered into a pretty sharp dispute. Weary at length of controversy, they became desirous of accommodating matters, and agreed, like good brothers, to share all the contents of the chest amongst them. Instantly sending for a locksmith, they ordered it to be broken open in their presence, when, instead of their bags of gold, they beheld it filled with sand, and the cudgel with the ingenious device upon the top of it. Overwhelmed with shame and vexation, they in vain tried to laugh the matter off and appear amused with this humorous sort of retaliation. No sooner did Messer Angelo hear of his old friend's improvement upon their original contrivance, than being highly entertained with it, he everywhere made it a source of general amusement among his acquaintance, frequently observing, "We foolish old fellows, you see, must take care of ourselves." And indeed it too often happens that the sole reward we reap from the unremitted toil and exertions of a whole life spent in enriching our posterity is disobedience and ingratitude even while we are alive. We may well imagine, then, with how little ceremony they are inclined to treat our memories when we are gone.

Novels of Girolamo Parabosco.

GIROLAMO PARABOSCO.[1]



THE novels of this author first appeared at Venice, in octavo, without date, and were afterwards reprinted in the years 1552 and 1558 at the same place. He was a native of Piacenza, where he distinguished himself as an excellent poet and musician, no less than as a novelist, though his title to originality in this last character is by no means well established. Too many of his stories have been borrowed from earlier novelists; and Boccaccio, Sacchetti, and Massuccio are, without the least acknowledgment, respectively laid under contribution. His work is preceded by an introductory eulogy on the city of Venice, where he appears, from descriptions of persons and of places, to have spent the chief portion of his time Thus nearly the whole of the characters introduced in his "Diporti" are Venetian gentlemen, and the retreat chosen for their narration, not far from Venice, with the occasion of their meeting, are all very minutely described. The party is supposed to consist of seventeen persons, among whom are Pietro Aretino, Speron Sperone, Ercole Bentivoglio, Lambertino, &c, who, finding from the appearance of the weather that there was little chance of enjoying themselves upon the water, agree, at the suggestion of Messer Badovaro, to leave their huts, erected for the convenience of angling on the water, and betake themselves to the still more innocent amusement of telling stories This occupies three days of their *diporti*, or sports, as each of the party has to repeat a tale, amounting in the whole to seventeen. They are alternately of a grave and humorous cast, and are interspersed with reflections appropriate to each style, and songs to give a further relish to the whole. In this form they were first published at Venice. They are in general of a less exceptionable nature than the tales in the "Decameron," though Pietro Aretino is supposed to have been present at their delivery, and furnishes one of the number. It is conjectured from what the author himself states in one of his letters, that this publication comprehended only a small part of what he had written, as he promises in a few days to give the remaining hundred.

FIRST DAY, NOVELLA VIII.

THERE once resided in the beautiful city of Brescia a certain youth of the name of Tommaso de' Tommasi, sprung from one of the most

[1] Diporti di M. Girolamo Parabosco Vinegia, 1552

wealthy and ancient families of that place, but unfortunately addicted to those pursuits into which high-spirited and thoughtless young men are too apt to fall. Careless of the consequences which attend their dissipated and licentious course of life, they yield themselves up an easy prey to every variety of gambling, intrigue, and boon companionship, as if they were more desirous of lavishing their regards upon cut-throats, parasites, and buffoons, than upon men of worth. These reprobates, with false and adulatory arts, are incessantly on the watch to impose upon and to ruin such credulous youths as listen to them; and when they once get their victims entangled in their snares, they prey upon the fortunes both of them and of their families, until scarcely a wreck is left. Such, unfortunately, were the companions of this easy but spirited youth, who in the course of four years dissipated almost all his fortune, a little country-seat being the sole remaining property which he could call his own. It was situated in the vicinity of the city, on the declivity of one of those mild and pleasant hills, many of which are in the possession of different nobles, who have fixed upon them for the beauty of their site and views; and these charming residences, resembling little paradises of pleasure rather than places of domestic abode, are called *Ronchi*. Out of all his noble villas and other houses, this then was the only little place now left him; and as it had been intended rather for a garden of delight, full of sweet fruits and flowers, than a source of profit in grain and wines, so it ill supplied its master's personal expenses, much less his usual establishment of hawks and dogs, buffoons and parasites, with other companions fully as expensive as these. Having become too late aware of the consequences of his conduct, he resolved, through fear of the disgrace he should incur in the eyes of all his friends, who too well knew the habits into which he had fallen, to abandon the birthplace of his ancestors altogether. With these views he determined to dispose of his little estate and a cottage adjoining, on the most advantageous terms he could obtain, without paying much regard to the honesty and propriety of his measures. Avoiding any public notice, he contrived to give some individuals a knowledge of his intentions, requesting as a favour that each would have the goodness to say nothing to his friends on the subject; and in this way he soon received considerable deposits from a number of different individuals who were desirous of purchasing the residence, without saying a word to each other. Having thus amassed a large sum of money, he soon after availed himself of an opportunity of disposing of the property altogether, and obtaining its full value in addition to the earnest-money which he had already received. But just as he was on the point of setting out with the proceeds in his hands, the whole transaction came to light, on which he was instantly seized and thrown into prison. His sole concern when he was there seemed to be how he could possibly contrive to retain possession of his treasure and obtain his liberty. For this purpose he sent in haste for his attorney, who had been the boon companion of his pleasures during his prosperity, and to him he communicated his views, though the man of law had expressed no little reluctance to attend, and to take his instruc-

tions on the subject, believing there was now an end to his client's business for ever. Having approached the prison gate, Tommaso very politely saluted him as formerly, on which the notary condoled with him, and inquired in what way he could be of service to him. "You know," replied Tommaso, "the liberal manner in which I have treated you, and all my other friends, as this very place can testify for me, being encaged here like a winged bird, as I am. But I shall not insist on the obligations I have laid you under, because I would willingly relieve you from their weight by begging you to take compassion on me, and assist me to procure my enlargement from this detestable spot. As you must know, at least as well as I do, what brought me here, I shall do much better than waste my time upon that subject, and shall instead inform you how I mean to get away, and keep possession of the proceeds of my house and farm, which I will stay here till Doomsday sooner than render up. I think you are upon good terms with our magnifico, the Podesta, no less on account of your social wit and humour than of the services you rendered him while you were his agent in Venice. Now, what I wish you particularly to impress upon his magisterial mind is, that I have altogether lost my wits, on finding that I have run through my fortune in so short a time and in so very scandalous a manner: and indeed it is almost strange I have not. I shall take care on my side to be guilty of all kinds of extravagant actions that may give probability to your story. And when you have carried me fairly through the difficulty, you will greatly oblige me by accepting of at least twenty-five gold ducats for your pains. Moreover, I shall be eternally indebted to you; and if I succeed by this contrivance in liberating myself from these gloomy walls without refunding my resources, I shall consider myself a great man yet. On thee, then, and on thee only, my friend, is my dependence, and trust me that my enlargement will be a work worthy of thy trouble."

The wary notary, one of those who possess the cunning of the serpent without the innocence of the dove, sensible of his influence with the magistrate, and tempted by the amount of the proposed fee, gave the prisoner his hand, promising to make the most strenuous exertions to bring his friend Tommaso out of durance, without insisting upon more than five and twenty ducats. Apprehensive lest the prisoner should overact his part in the mad character which he intended to assume, the attorney suggested that he should make no other reply to all the questions which might be put to him than by a single ludicrous gesture, and, repeating his injunction to this effect, he left him to adjourn to the residence of the magistrate. Being upon the pleasantest terms, he immediately entered upon a variety of amusing topics, when there suddenly appeared one of the unlucky personages whom Tommaso had imposed upon, appealing vehemently to the magistrate for redress, and demanding the restitution of his money. To him the attorney in the gentlest possible tone replied, turning at the same time towards his friend the Podesta, "What! is the gentlemen so unfortunate, then, as to have dealings with that madman?" "Madman! what is it you talk of?" returned the creditor. "I wish he were no

more wicked than he is mad." "Alas! I fear, whatever may be your opinion," said the attorney, in the calmest voice, "that he will turn out a mere idiot, and one that ought to be confined. I imagine that his unfortunate circumstances have driven him altogether out of his senses. Could I suppose for a moment that our magnifico here was acquainted with his real state, I should express my surprise that he has committed to custody for debt a mere fool, such as this poor wretch is. I am very apprehensive that should he really have robbed any one, or been intrusted with money, he may have thrown it into the first ditch he came near or scattered it on the public highway.' The gentleman, however, advanced arguments to prove the perfect sanity of the prisoner, and indeed that he had proved somewhat too acute; but these were so well rebutted by the evidence of the lawyer, that the magistrate, giving credit to it, ordered the accused to appear by way of ascertaining the truth. Signor Tommaso was then brought forward, having already made a strange metamorphosis in his appearance by tearing his clothes to pieces, and being interrogated on the subject nearest his creditor's heart, gave only the manifest signs of folly recommended by his legal adviser. In a short time the rest of his creditors appeared, and bringing the same charges upon the very same grounds, and obtaining only a repetition of his antics, the Podesta, to try his sincerity, immediately ordered him to be put to the question, which however only elicited symptoms of fear and folly, such as he showed before the application was made. He would, in fact, almost have endured to be torn limb from limb rather than be separated from his money. All other means adopted to obtain some kind of information from him turned out equally fruitless, and the Podesta was at length compelled by the representations of the notary, who carried the whole affair through with great skill, to sign an order for the release of his mad client without paying anything whatever. The attorney, calling on his client the next day for the stated sum, was surprised to find he could get no other answer from him than that which he had himself taught him. By all his entreaties for the five and twenty ducats, he obtained nothing but the same gestures which had sufficed to exonerate him from the rest of his creditors, and the deceiver for once fell into his own trap. As he could not venture to reveal the affair, he was obliged to take the whole patiently, and of the two he was certainly the more deserving of punishment.

SECOND DAY, NOVELLA XIV.

THERE formerly resided in the rich and beautiful city of Bologna a brave and intelligent youth of the name of Faustino, whose birth and accomplishments entitled him to rank among the noblest and proudest of the place. To these gifts of nature and of fortune was added a susceptible heart, and he soon became deeply enamoured of a young lady of exquisite beauty, whose name was Eugenia, and who in a short time seemed inclined to return his passion with equal tenderness and

truth. Such was her lover's extreme desire of beholding her, that he availed himself of every opportunity and encountered every risk to enjoy her society, frequently being in wait for hours to catch a mere glimpse of her, and employing numberless emissaries to instruct him as to her motions. Though the young lady's parents had been unable to extort any confession of her attachment from her own lips, they were at no loss to perceive it, and endeavoured to obviate the danger to be apprehended from its indulgence, believing that the young lover, on account of his superior rank and fortune, entertained no serious intentions of making her his wife. With this view they kept a very strict watch over their daughter, debarring her from the visits, and even from the sight of Faustino, as much as they possibly could. Yet her mother, being of a religious turn of mind, was unwilling that she should relinquish her usual attendance on divine worship, and herself accompanied her daughter every morning to hear mass at a church near their own house, but at so very early an hour, that not even the artisans of the city, much less the young gentry of the place, were stirring. And there she heard service performed by a priest expressly on her own account, though several other persons might happen to be present who were in the habit of very early rising.

Now among these was a certain corn merchant, who had been established only for a short time in Bologna. His name was Ser Nastagio de' Rodiotti, a man who had driven many a hard bargain and thriven wonderfully in his trade, but of so devout a turn withal, that he would not for the world have made an usurious contract, or even speculated to any extent, without having first punctually attended mass, believing doubtless that so good an example more than counterbalanced, in the eye of Heaven, the evil consequences of his actions. And these were certainly very great, especially in the way of raising the price of bread by his vast monopoly of that necessary article of life. Such, however, was his exemplary conduct in attending church, that he lost not a single opportunity of showing himself there among the earliest of the congregation, having afterwards the consolation to reflect that he had discharged all his religious duties and was ready for business before a great portion of his fellow-citizens were stirring.

Now in a short time it also reached the ears of Faustino, through the good offices, it is supposed, of the young lady, that high mass was to be heard every morning at a certain church, with every particular relating to the devotees who attended and the nearest way thither. Rejoiced at this news, her lover now resolved to rise somewhat earlier than he had been accustomed to do, that he might avail himself of the same advantage that the lady enjoyed in beginning the day with religious duties. For this purpose he assumed a different dress, the better to deceive the eyes of her careful mother, being perfectly aware that she merely made her appearance thus early with her daughter for the sake of concealing her from his sight. In this way the young lady had the merit of bringing Faustino to church, where they had the pleasure of gazing at each other with the utmost devotion; except indeed when the unlucky tradesman whom we have just mentioned happened to place himself, as was frequently the case, exactly in their

way, so as to intercept the silent communion of souls. And this he did in so vexatious a manner, that they could scarcely observe each other for a moment without exposing themselves to his searching eye and keen observation. Greatly displeased at this kind of inquisition into his looks and motions, the lover frequently wished the devout corn-dealer in purgatory, or that he would at least offer up his prayers in another church. Such an antipathy did he at length conceive to Ser Nastagio, that he resolved to employ his utmost efforts to prevail upon him to withdraw himself from that spot. Revolving in his mind a great variety of plans, he at last hit upon one which he believed could not fail to succeed, and in a manner equally safe and amusing. With this view he hastened without delay to the officiating priest, whom he addressed in the following pious and charitable strain: "It has ever been esteemed, my good Messer Pastore, a most heavenly and laudable disposition to devote ourselves to the relief of our poorer brethren, and this you doubtless know far better than I can inform you, from the fact of our blessed Saviour having actually appeared on earth to redeem us from our sins. But though every species of charity is highly commendable, that which seeks out its objects without waiting to be solicited far transcends the rest For there are many who, however destitute, feel ashamed to come forward for the purpose of begging alms. Now I think, my worthy pastor, that I have of late observed one of these deserving objects in a person who frequents your church. He was formerly a Jew, but through the mercy of Heaven, which never ceases, not long ago he became a Christian, and one whose exemplary life and conduct render him in all respects worthy of the name. Yet, on the other hand, there is not a more destitute being on the face of the earth, while such is his modesty, that I assure you I have frequently had the utmost difficulty in persuading him to accept of alms. It would really be a very meritorious act, worthy of the excellent character I have heard of you, were you to touch some morning upon his cruel misfortunes, relating his conversion to our faith, and the singular modesty with which he attempts to conceal his wants. This would probably procure for him a handsome contribution; and if you will only have the kindness to apprize me of the day, I will take care to bring a number of my friends along with me, and we shall be sure to find this poor fellow seated in your church, where I know he is often employed in listening gratefully to your spiritual advice and consolation."

Our kind-hearted priest, unlike some of his brethren, who are too apt to appropriate the alms of the poor to themselves, making a traffic of the divine mercy of their Redeemer, impelled only by pure zeal and charity, cheerfully complied with the wily lover's request. He proposed, then, as the most favourable occasion, the next Sunday morning, when a large assemblage of people would be present, regretting that he had not been sooner made acquainted with the affair. Faustino next gave the priest an accurate description of the features, person, and dress of our unfortunate corn merchant, observing that the poor man always appeared neat and clean, so that he could not possibly mistake him. Then taking leave of the good friar, he hastened to

communicate this piece of mischief to some of his youthful companions, all of whom now awaited with great impatience for the approaching Sunday. Punctually, on its arrival, were they found assembled at the church, even early enough to hear the first mass, and there Messer Nastagio was seen stationed at his usual post, surrounded by a crowd of people collected for the purpose of witnessing the consecration of the place. After going through the Evangelists and the Creed, and muttering a few aves, the good priest paused and looked about him; then wiping his forehead and taking breath for a while, he again addressed the congregation, opening his subject as follows: "Dearly beloved brethren, you must be aware, for our Saviour Himself has enlightened you on that head, and I have myself likewise insisted upon it as well as I could; you must be aware, I say, that the most pleasing thing you can do in the eyes of the Lord is to show your charity towards poorer Christians, loving and assisting them according to their wants, as far as lies in your power. I trust, therefore, I shall not have much difficulty in persuading you to show the fruits of this good seed of charity in the manner I desire. For as I know you are not wanting in charity, but rather abounding in good works, I am not afraid to inform you that there is a most deserving yet destitute object before you, who, though too modest to urge your compassion, is in every way worthy of it Pray take pity upon him; I commend him to your kindness. Behold him," he cried, pointing full at Ser Nastagio; "lo! thou art the man Yes," he continued, while the corn merchant stared at him in the utmost astonishment, "yes, thou art the man! Thy modesty shall no longer conceal thee from the eyes of the people, which are now fixed upon thee. For though thou wert once an Israelite, my friend, thou art now one of the lost sheep which are found, and if thou hast not much temporal, thou hast a hoard of eternal wealth." He addressed himself during the whole of this time, both by words and signs, to Ser Nastagio, yet the poor merchant could by no means persuade himself, against the evidence of his own reason, that he was the individual pointed out. Without stirring, therefore, from the spot, he somewhat reluctantly put his hand into his pocket, so far conquering his avarice as to prepare to bestow his alms in the same manner as the rest of the congregation The first person to present his contribution was the author of the trick, who approaching the spot where the merchant stood, offered his alms, and, in spite of Ser Nastagio, dropped them into his hat, making a sign to the people expressive of his admiration at the poor man's modesty. And though the incensed tradesman exclaimed in an angry tone to the young lover, "I have a longer purse than thou hast ears, man!" it availed him nothing. The good priest pursued his theme without noticing Ser Nastagio's remark, except by saying, "Give no credit to his words, good people, but give him alms—give him alms; it is his modest merit which prevents him from accepting them. Yes, go, thrust them into the good man's pockets, fill his hat, his shoes, his clothes, with them, and make him bear away with him the good fruits of your charity." Then once more directing his attention to the confused and angry merchant, he exclaimed. "Do not look thus ashamed, but take them—take them!

for believe me, good friend, many greater and better men have been reduced to the same piteous plight, yea, even worse than that you are now in. You should rather consider it as an honour than otherwise, inasmuch as your necessities have not been the consequence of your own misconduct, but solely arise from your embracing the light of truth, and becoming a disciple of our Lord."

The priest had no sooner ended, than there was a general rush of the whole congregation towards the place where the astonished merchant stood, endeavouring who should be the first to deposit their donations in his hands, while he in vain attempted to resist the tide of charitable contributions which now poured in upon him on every side. He had likewise to struggle against his own avarice, no less than against the officious donors of alms, for he would willingly have received the money, though he did all in his power to repulse their offers. When the tumult had at length a little subsided, the incensed merchant began to attack the priest in the most virulent terms until the preacher was almost inclined to suspect that he must really in some way have been misinformed as to the proper object of his charity. He then began to make his excuses, as well as he could, for the error into which he had fallen; but the lover's purpose was accomplished and the deed could not be recalled. For it was soon reported that Ser Nastagio, the corn merchant, had that very morning been recommended to the charitable notice of the congregation as an example of true conversion from the Jewish to the Christian creed. This story was quickly circulated throughout the whole city, to the infinite amusement of all its inhabitants, more especially of the young lovers, who had now full leisure once more to contemplate each other's perfections, free from the observation of Ser Nastagio, who was never known to enter that church again.

Marco Cademosto da Lodi.

MARCO CADEMOSTO DA LODI.[1]

THE particulars relating to the life and character of this novelist at all interesting or deserving to be known are few. He held an ecclesiastical office at the Roman court, where he is said to have enjoyed the patronage and affection of Leo X, but several of his sonnets, addressed to that Pope, show that he was by no means satisfied with the share assigned to him of the pontifical favours. In addition to his claims as a novelist, he acquired the reputation of a tolerable poet; but in neither of these branches is he so highly estimated as many of his contemporaries. His poems, and his novels to the number of seven, appeared together at Rome in 1544, dedicated to the Cardinal Ippolito d'Este The remainder of his works were destroyed, according to the author's account, during the great sack of Rome. One of the best of his stories, in the opinion of Mr. Dunlop, and which will be found below, is that of an old man, who by his will leaves his whole fortune to hospitals, to the detriment of his own family; but the latter contrive to recover the property at the ingenious suggestion of their father's steward. Lodi was neither a very abundant nor a very excellent writer; and perhaps the mediocrity of his genius may account for the little encouragement which he met with at the court of so munificent a Pontiff as Leo, of whose treatment he speaks in no very guarded terms.

The chief merit of Lodi will be found to resolve itself into his skilful manner of modifying or enlarging the stories furnished by his predecessors, like too many of the novelists of the sixteenth century, who not unfrequently appropriated whole tales as their own. Yet were we to give credit to their repeated asseverations, we are bound to believe that the great bulk of their productions was not merely original, but founded upon real incidents thrown into a fictitious dress. In this, with too little reason, they are supported by many of the critics of their own country, who argue from the slight circumstances of a few real names and facts that the stories themselves are true.

THERE dwelt in Padua, not very long ago, a gentleman of the name of Scipione Sanguinaccio, whose extreme avarice, to which he had devoted a whole life of wretchedness, rendered him notorious through-

[1] Sonetti ed altre Rime con proposte e risposte di alcuni uomini degni, e con alcune Novelle, Capitoli, e Stanze in Roma, per Antonio Blado Asolano.

out the city, as one of the most penurious of its usurers. It had always been the height of his ambition to grow richer and richer, by the accumulation of interest upon interest, until he should have attained to an extreme old age. This being at length the case, he grew very infirm, and began to turn his thoughts, however reluctantly, to the propriety of making his last will and testament. By recent reflections on the subject, he had become so deeply sensible of his numberless offences against Heaven, that, desirous of lessening the amount of these his manifold sins and transgressions, he determined to leave the bulk of his property for the endowment of monasteries and hospitals, to the no small injury of two sons, whose interests he believed to be very properly sacrificed, in order to ensure the safety of his own soul. The young men, however, hearing of this disposition of his affairs, were by no means of their father's opinion, lamenting to each other that he should have imbibed those foolish fears and prejudices which had led to so disagreeable a result. The old gentleman, on his part, imagined that his sons were not duly sensible of the high importance which ought now to be attached to his eternal interests. Such became the anxiety of the young men on this head, that they agreed to consult some of their most intimate friends, entreating them to employ their influence with their father in order to obtain a more equitable adjustment of his affairs, and to save his family from being consigned to poverty and shame for the sake of others "Pray remind him," they said, "that true charity begins at home, among our kindred and friends, and do not spare his conscience on the subject" But these arguments, so far from prevailing with their aged father, led him only to adhere still more pertinaciously to his own opinion, and had he lived much longer, he would infallibly have deprived them of the little already provided for them, being resolutely bent upon blotting out his transgressions, as far as money could cancel them, in which laudable intention he vowed he would die. Now it so happened that immediately before his decease, this unjust disposition of his property came to the ears of one of his old stewards, who immediately hastened to condole with the sons on this melancholy occasion "Ah! my dear young masters!" he cried, "good Messer Angelo and good Messer Alberto, I truly sympathise with you both. When I heard that my old master had been guilty of making so unreasonable a will, I cannot express the grief and concern which I felt for your sakes. Indeed I have thought of nothing else since I heard of it, and I think I have formed a plan which will set all to rights yet, if you will be guided by me For, his money shall go the way it ought to do, so help me God, whatever may happen to his soul; and I will tell you how we can contrive it. I think he cannot possibly live through the night, so that we must keep the house as quiet as we can, and close the doors against all impertinent intruders, who would only disturb him in his last moments When your poor father has breathed his last, we must carry his body decently and quietly into another room, which being done, out of mere regard for you, I will take his place on the sick-bed where he made his first wicked will. Now, before it becomes known that your dear father has departed, you must both come to my bedside

weeping, and praying that God would please to restore your parent, and to remove his dangerous distemper, to the end that it may appear as if he were still alive. Then lose no time in sending early the next morning for the same attorney who was before employed, and I will make another will for you much more equitable and better to your liking."

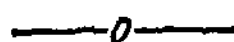
On hearing these consolatory words, the young men were not a little comforted, and expressed their gratitude for such wise and humane counsel. "We always," said the eldest, "believed you to be very kindly inclined towards us, and we know, my good Galeazzo, that your kindness is equalled by your prudence and discretion. Should the plan you propose turn out as advantageous for us as you seem to think, you may depend upon our lasting gratitude, and you shall certainly reap your share of the fruits of it." Much more conversation passed between them to the same effect, and not long after the old gentleman expired. His body was then, in execution of their plan, removed into another chamber, while the wily old steward soon after assumed his master's place, the curtains being drawn close around him, and the sick man's nightcap put upon his head A dim taper was burning by his side, and everything was arranged in such a way as almost to bid defiance to detection. The attorney and witnesses now arrived, when Galeazzo, with his head half enveloped in the bed-clothes, attempted to address the man of law in a feeble tone of voice: "I have been thinking a great deal since yesterday, Messer Pietro, about many particulars in the late will you drew. And alas! I fear I was about to act very unjustly towards my poor boys, not having that inward reliance upon Heaven which all good Christians ought to have. But I thank God that I have been permitted to think better of it; and it does not appear to me that by depriving my own children of their lawful inheritance for the sake of others I can possibly recommend myself to the mercy of Heaven. Proceed, therefore, good Messer Pietro, while there is yet time I will cancel my former hard and unnatural bequests Let my poor boys have something to shield them from a pitiless world; let them inherit what I toiled to obtain for them. Indite it as my will that they succeed to the whole of my property, as well real as personal, chargeable only with the following legacy. I bequeath to my tried and faithful old servant Galeazzo, in return for his long and valued services, the sum of two thousand ducats, one half of which shall be payable at Christmas, the other half on Easter Day." At these words the two sons, not in the least expecting such a stratagem on the part of their old friend, came forward somewhat hastily, saying, as they approached the bed, "But, dear father, as we shall have pleasure in attending to this or any other little commissions which you may mention to us, say no more; you will exert yourself too much" "What is that you say?" inquired the patient in an angry tone. "Only," replied they, "that we would wish you to dispose of your whole property as you judge best; but, dear father, we would just suggest that, however meritorious the services of Galeazzo may have been, so large a sum is perhaps beyond either his wishes or his deserts." "I cannot think so," replied their false father,

still in an offended tone; "I cannot think so, sons. He has been a faithful servant of mine for more than four-and-twenty years; I cannot do too much for him!" "Still, dear father," they repeated, "we think you are giving him too much." To which Galeazzo, quite out of patience, replied in great anger, "You had better take care what you are about, and not provoke me too far, for if you do, I will get up, weak as I am, and give you reason to repent of your behaviour." Alarmed lest their false father should really put his threat into execution, the brothers remained silent, while the notary proceeded to state the sum at two thousand ducats, after which the will was regularly signed and sealed, and the witnesses were dismissed. The party being left together, the avaricious brothers could not conceal their dissatisfaction, and began to upbraid the cunning steward for having inserted his own name in the will. "You have greatly deceived us," they continued; "we could not have imagined that you would have been guilty of such a trick, and have turned the affair in this way to your own advantage, inserting your own name in the will, just as if you had been one of our brothers. Why did you not rely on our promise that we would reward you handsomely, instead of assuming so much authority, and dictating to us as you did? But it is done, and there is no helping it now. We suppose you must have your money; but you have certainly not behaved well."

Astonished at such ingratitude on the part of the brothers, Messer Galeazzo, turning very sharply round upon them, replied: "Are not you ashamed, Messer Angelo and Messer Alberto, to address me in language like this? What might I have expected, then, had I trusted to your promises? You complain that I have inserted my own name, as if, instead of a servant, I had been your own brother, to which I reply, that I have treated you not only like a brother, but like a father. I have bestowed upon you a fortune of twelve thousand ducats, reserving only for myself the modest sum of two thousand. It is merely what I deserve in return for the infinite obligations I have now laid you under, without taking into consideration my long and faithful stewardship. After such usage I can no longer think of remaining in your service, and it is well that your kind father has so handsomely provided for me in his will, which you will be pleased to attend to at the appointed time. There is one piece of advice, also, which I beg leave to offer to you, no less for your own sakes than for mine. Never let a single syllable transpire of what has passed between us in regard to your dear father's will, and I assure you it will never be divulged by me." Compelled to promise payment at the stipulated time, the brothers with a very ill grace dismissed the steward, who took his leave of them, bowing very formally, and returning them many ironical thanks.

Novels of Giovambattista Giraldi Cinthio.

GIOVAMBATTISTA GIRALDI CINTHIO.[1]



GIOVAMBATTISTA GIRALDI CINTHIO, the author of the "Hecatomithi," one of the most voluminous novelists of the sixteenth century, rendered himself extremely popular among his own countrymen by the vivid and daring character of his writings. His praises were celebrated by nearly all the contemporary wits and scholars of the period in which he lived. He was of noble lineage, and was born at Ferrara early in the sixteenth century, and flourished during the sway of Ercole da Este II., Duke of Ferrara, in whose service he filled the office of secretary. His death occurred in the year 1573.[2]

The "Hecatomithi," or Hundred Fables, were first published in 1565, and consisted, notwithstanding their title, of only seventy stories, a contradiction noticed by his friend Piccolomini in a letter to the author, prefixed to the "Hecatomithi," and dated the 12th of January 1563, in which he says: "I assure you it is long since I have had the pleasure of perusing any work so entertaining as yours. But I cannot conceive your reason for entitling it 'Hecatomithi,' when it contains no more than seventy novels." From this it might be inferred that the author postponed his further prosecution of the task until he was far advanced in life, the letter in question being dated 1563, just ten years previous to his decease; a sufficient length of time for the composition of the additional number of novels. In a poetical introduction to his work, Cinthio, however, asserts that the entire series was the production of his youth, though he does not state his reasons for holding so great a proportion of them in reserve, while he put the others forth with a title so little adapted to them. On this subject he has the following lines, alluding to their early composition.—

> "Poscia ch' a te, lavor de' miei primi anni,
> Accio c' habbia nel duol qualche ristoro,
> Mi chiaman nell' età grave gli affanni," &c

> "Since now the griefs of eld my thoughts recall
> To the fond labours of my boyish years,
> Cheating the heavy hours of half their pain," &c.

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[1] Hecatomithi, overo Cento Novelle di Giraldi Cinthio. Monteregale, 1565 First edition.

[2] Many interesting remarks on Cinthio, and on the literary controversies in which he was engaged, are contained in Barotti's defence of the Ferrarese authors against the censures of Fontanini.

And farther on:

"Dunque se stata sei gran tempo occolta,
O de' miei giovenili anni fatica,
In cui studio già posi, e cura molta."

———"Young tasks, long time neglected,
Yet treasured up, that cost me many a sigh,
And many an anxious thought in times gone by."

The "Hecatomithi" of Cinthio is divided into two parts, each containing five decades, composed of ten novels each; under which arrangement, the number ought to amount exactly to the "Hecatomithi," or Hundred Stories. This title, however, is scarcely yet applicable to the work, inasmuch as, with the ten introductory novels prefixed to the first decade, it will be found to contain so many beyond what it really imports. The occasion of the production of his novels is referred by their author to the famous sack of Rome, and to the consequent pestilence which occurred soon after the storming of the city. In imitation, then, of Boccaccio, Cinthio feigns that a party of ladies and gentlemen, seeking refuge from the contagion, and from the horrors around them, set sail for Marseilles, and beguile the irksomeness of their voyage with the relation of tales either of terror or of humour.

Cinthio appears, in many respects, to have had Boccaccio in view, as well in the subject as in the disposition and manner of his work. In the tales themselves, however, there is but little resemblance to his model. the imaginative portion is less pleasing, and the incidents are often improbable and revolting. The style is likewise laboured and involved to a degree of painful care and fastidiousness, while it is still inferior to that of earlier authors in point of purity and correctness. But, with all his errors, he is a fine and powerful writer; and, with the terrific subjects he has chosen, the strong dramatic interest which he contrives to awaken, and the energy and passion thrown into his narratives, he is perhaps, of all novelists, the best calculated to rouse the sympathies and attract the admiration of his countrymen. Some injudicious admirers, indeed, have on this account presumed to place him above his celebrated predecessor, not scrupling to assert that he is in no way inferior to the great Boccaccio. Yet it is his faults, his daring and extravagant genius, which have given rise, in some degree, to this blind partiality—a partiality which can only be accounted for by the violent and often ferocious character of the times in which he wrote. Thus his tragic stories are all of a dark and terrific description, abounding in extravagance and atrocities, on which the author's imagination seems to delight to dwell, until, like some great enchanter, he has spell-bound the faculties of his readers. He appears to have exhausted the catalogue of human crimes, and to have ransacked every country and every age, sparing neither classic nor romantic traditions, for subjects which he might dissect and display to the world in all their horrible minuteness

The introduction, consisting of ten stories, professes to hold forth the happiness of connubial love and the fatal effects of illicit inter-

course. The first decade is composed of miscellaneous stories; the second, histories of attachments formed in opposition to the will of relatives and superiors; the third, of the infidelity of wives and husbands; the fourth, of those who, by laying snares for others, accomplish their own ruin; the fifth, examples of connubial fidelity in trying circumstances; the sixth, acts of generosity and courtesy; the seventh, *bon mots* and sayings; the eighth, examples of ingratitude; the ninth, remarkable vicissitudes of fortune; the tenth, acts of chivalry.

Of the stories which are of his own invention, the second tale of the second decade is that of Orbecche, daughter of Sulmone, king of Persia, who, refusing the hand of the prince of Parthia, unites her fate with that of Orontes, an Armenian, with whom she flies from her father's court, and undergoes a variety of sufferings. From its wild and extravagant character it was long a favourite story with the Italians, and enjoyed a reputation far beyond its merits, many dramas and other pieces being founded upon it, both in Italy and elsewhere. One of these, from the pen of the novelist himself, who dramatised many of his own stories, is very highly esteemed in Italy.

The seventh story of the third decade of Cinthio is deserving of more particular notice, as having furnished Shakespeare with the incidents of his celebrated tragedy of "Othello" A few of the more striking coincidences and variations in the two productions will here be pointed out, in which Shakespeare has generally improved upon the novelist. In the drama Iago is actuated to revenge by jealousy and resentment arising from Cassio's promotion; while in the novel he is merely influenced by love turned into hatred. In Shakespeare, the villain employs his wife to steal the handkerchief, but in the Italian this deed is performed by himself. The noble character of Othello is also wholly of the poet's creation, he being drawn by the novelist with the vulgar features of a morose, selfish, and cruel husband. Much of the conclusion is equally the poet's own, and he has throughout displayed far more brilliancy of fancy and of language In some instances Shakespeare has rendered the story more probable, tempered its ferocious character, and, by throwing into it the fascination of poetry, sentiment, and passion, has invested it with new dignity and with a new life. Thus in the Italian the Moor is assisted by his Ancient in the murder of Desdemona, yet he has afterwards the temerity to provoke and to dismiss him, which leads to the discovery of the crime—absurdities not adopted in the English drama. In the original the assassins pull down part of the house, in order that it may be supposed that the lady has been buried in its ruins Iago's treachery is likewise attributed to Desdemona's rejection of his passion, in consequence of which he resolves to compass the destruction of both her and Cassio, whom he believes to be the favoured lover. In the Italian he confirms the suspicions of Othello by showing him the handkerchief in the hands of a woman in the lieutenant's house. He then informs against him in the sequel, and Othello, according to the usual practice, is put to the torture, though without deigning to make any confession. He is subsequently banished, and assassinated by some of Desdemona's relations in his retreat.

In his deviations from his model, it will be seen Shakespeare has for the most part improved upon the incidents, although he has in general adhered as closely to the facts as the nature of the respective productions would admit. Several of the characters bear the strongest resemblance to those in the novel, more particularly those of Desdemona, of Cassio, and of the arch-traitor himself. The gradual and artful method pursued by Iago of infusing suspicions, like a slow poison, into the noble nature of Othello, is closely copied from the novelist This is calculated, to a certain degree, to diminish our admiration of the consummate skill with which the dramatist was supposed to have wrought up and unfolded the whole train of mischief. In drawing his character, too, of the consummate villain, he has adhered, with few traits of difference, to the Italian author; so that in his "Othello," as in most of the dramas founded upon Italian subjects, the supreme merit of Shakespeare will be found in the magic of his language and versification, in the playfulness and vividness of his fancy, in the truth and beauty of his sentiment; and above all, in that fascinating power which he never fails to exercise over the human passions.

The fifth novel of the eighth decade suggested to Shakespeare the comedy of "Measure for Measure," of which, however, the immediate original was Whetstone's play of "Promos and Cassandra." But on both of these Shakespeare has greatly improved.[1]

Of the several editions of the "Hecatomithi," the first appeared at Monteregale, in Sicily, in two volumes 8vo, 1565, the next at Venice, in 1566, followed by a third, at the same place, 1574.

FIRST DECADE, NOVELLA VIII.

NICCOLO DA ESTE, the second of that name among the sovereigns of Ferrara, his uncle, who was distinguished as Niccolo Zoppo, having before him borne that name, had a numerous progeny of sons by different women to whom he had been attached. Two of these, on whom he had always lavished the fondest proofs of regard, traced their origin to the same mother: their names were Leonello and Borso When advanced in years, Niccolo married Ricciarda, daughter of Aloise, Marquis of Salucio, who bore him two sons, in addition to his other family; the first of whom he called Ercole, the second Gismondo, after the Emperor of that name, who had stood sponsor for him while he resided, about the period of his birth, in Ferrara. Both these children were left, after the Duke's death, to the guardianship of their half-brother, Leonello, who, incited by lust of power, soon usurped the dominions which of right belonged to the legitimate son.

In order more securely to enjoy the fruits of his treachery, he sent his two half-brothers, still very young, to the court of the king of Naples. He then formed a union with a daughter of one of the lords of Mantua, by whom he had a son, called after his grandfather

[1] History of Fiction, vol ii p. 428

Niccolo da Este. But it was the will of Providence, that in the same manner as the usurper's father had left his infant sons Ercole and Gismondo to his care, he himself, dying soon after, was also compelled to leave his own son Niccolo, yet an infant, to the protection of his brother Borso, the first of this ancient and illustrious family who adopted the title of duke, and who had always been permitted to look forward to the possession of the government, on condition of afterwards leaving it to his young ward, Niccolo, whom he brought up in the noblest manner.

The two brothers, whom the deceased Leonello had banished to the court of Naples, during this time already began to evince numerous proofs both of talent and courage, by no means unworthy of their princely descent. The time which the young Niccolo devoted to abandoned pleasures was by them spent in military exercises and other laudable pursuits, most honourable to the character of noble cavaliers. Nor was Borso altogether insensible to their merits. Hearing of their high reputation, he invited the two brothers to return to the court of Ferrara, offering to Ercole the government of Modena, and to Gismondo that of Reggio, still retaining Niccolo at his own court, with the intention of discharging the high trust reposed in him by his brother, by leaving him at his own death the title of lord of Ferrara The king of Naples, who did not duly appreciate the merit of Ercole, dismissed him from his service, while the latter was instigated by Borso to resent this conduct. Meeting each other soon after in battle, the king, assaulting Ercole, was not only driven back by him, but lost part of his royal mantle, which was torn from his shoulders in the contest. Incensed at this indignity, he vowed deadly revenge against its author, and sought by every means in his power to accomplish his ruin. Having adopted a variety of schemes, all of which proved abortive, he resolved, as a last resource, to employ every art of deceit before he abandoned his design. With this view he despatched some trusty messengers to Ercole, with an offer to assist him in expelling Borso from his dominions, in order to recover the rightful heritage of his ancestors. Ercole, aware of his views, replied to this embassy that he could in no way proceed in the attempt unless he received authority for so doing under the king's own hand. "And how would you then act?" inquired the messengers from the king "In such a way," replied Ercole, "as I might think best calculated to recover my dominions;" and believing from this answer that he intended to pursue the design, they all returned, overjoyed to carry the intelligence to the king But Ercole, on the contrary, immediately communicated to Duke Borso the whole negotiation that had just taken place, as well as his own answer to the king. The Duke was greatly touched at this proof of honourable conduct on the part of Ercole, and entreated him to persevere and receive the answer of the king. In a short time letters were delivered to him from his majesty, expressing his perfect readiness to afford him, as he had always wished, every assistance in his power to accomplish the object he had in view, representing that an occasion seemed now to offer itself which ought not to be omitted, if he had the resolution to execute what he had previously meditated,

execution." They then took their leave of Ercole, not a little elated with their imaginary success.

Ercole, aware that this was a new snare laid for him by the king, who would not fail to accuse him to Borso of treason, bringing these young men as witnesses against him, hastened secretly to Ferrara under cover of the night, nor slackened his pace until he arrived at the palace, where he demanded admission to the Duke. Borso sent the messenger back to learn who was in his company, and on hearing he was alone, he sent a guard of twenty cavaliers, with orders to admit none but Ercole, from whom he eagerly inquired the urgent nature of his business. "The treachery of the king of Naples," was the reply, "aims not only at my life, but at that of your Excellency;" and here Ercole repeated the whole of his last interview with the traitors, in which they endeavoured, by engaging him in their schemes, to accomplish the ruin of both. "I was on the point," he continued, "of chastising them as they deserved, but judged it better first to acquaint your Excellency with the extent of their villainy, in order to abide by your opinion in this, as in all other affairs." The Duke was astonished on hearing their names, having always accounted them amongst the most faithful of his adherents. Yet the voice, the countenance, and the open manner of Ercole, gave so strong an assurance of his sincerity, that he did not venture to question for a moment the truth of his statements. Turning towards him with the utmost confidence, the Duke exclaimed, "What am I henceforth to think of the honour and fidelity of mankind, when these very persons, whom I have so long trusted and favoured as my friends, are found guilty of conspiring against my life! But in order that they may meet with such punishment as their conduct deserves, I should still wish you to feign approbation of their designs, and to render me an exact account of all their motions." Ercole then mounted his horse, and returned to Modena, where he again met the conspirators on the following day, flattering them that he was now prepared to undertake the great enterprise for which they were there assembled, and that he entertained no doubts of its ultimate success. At the same time he took care to forward to the Duke intelligence of everything which occurred. The ringleader of the plot, pretending that he was about to celebrate the marriage of one of his daughters, set out to Ferrara, with an invitation to the Duke to favour him with the honour of his company at the approaching nuptials. Borso courteously complied with the request, and immediately sent to acquaint Ercole with the fact, and with the measures which he conceived it most judicious to adopt. On the appointed day, when the conspirators were prepared to wait upon the Duke in order to escort him to Modena, they first called upon their friend Ercole, to acquaint him that early on the following morning they should set out to attend the Duke, and delivering him a prisoner into his hands on their return, hoped to hail him as the new ruler of Ferrara. "Heaven so prosper your design," cried Ercole, "as I mean to bestow upon each of you such a share of the prize that you will never need to wish for more." They then proceeded to marshal their band of followers, a troop of thirty horse, all

brave and reckless men, who were appointed to meet on a certain day in the plains of Buon Porto, where they would be instructed how to act. Ercole, on his side, had written to his brother Gismondo, the governor of Reggio, to furnish as many lances and other troops as he could collect, and then hasten to join him in Modena, or follow with the utmost expedition to Ferrara, in order to secure the persons of certain traitors conspiring against his own life and that of the Duke The next morning Ercole and the conspirators mounted horse at the break of day, and set out at a gentle pace, all in high spirits, and jesting with one another as they went along. But they had scarcely arrived at Finale, when they suddenly found themselves surrounded by Gismondo with four hundred horse, and at the same moment Ercole unsheathed his sword, and rushing upon the leader of the conspirators, who rode near him, proclaimed him his prisoner, crying out, "Yield, traitors, yield! Did you imagine your base attempts against the noble Duke's life and my own were unknown to us? No; you will soon meet with the just vengeance your crimes deserve. Guards, seize your prisoners; bind them and follow us to Ferrara." Thus secured, they were conducted to their dungeon in the castle, momentarily awaiting the tidings of their doom.

After expressing his gratitude to the two brothers, the Duke, dismissing them to the government of their respective cities, commanded the Podesta to attend and take the depositions of the prisoners, being resolved to penetrate into their motives for such an atrocious attempt Perceiving no chance of making their escape, they confessed their guilt, of which they felt truly sensible, and admitted that they deserved to meet their fate, as they had aimed at compassing the death both of Ercole and the Duke. The Podesta upon this inveighed bitterly against their ingratitude and cruelty, in thus consenting, at the instance of their worst enemy, to turn their arms against their benefactor and friend, who had lavished innumerable honours upon them. Without pleading the least mitigation of their crimes, the unfortunate men could only entreat the Podesta that he would deign to use his influence with the Duke to treat them rather according to his known clemency and generosity than the strict tenor of the law. On obtaining their confessions, the Duke immediately proceeded to advise the king of Naples that he had secured the band of conspirators, who were then awaiting their sentence at his hands; that he had been greatly shocked on discovering his majesty to have been a party to their design of assassinating two of his majesty's most faithful adherents, as the Duke and Ercole always esteemed themselves, one of whom had promoted his interests both in peace and war for above twenty years, while the other had shown himself ready to lay down his life and dominions in the same cause; that the sole fruits these men had reaped in their nefarious attempt were disgrace, imprisonment, and, were they to meet with their just deserts, a shameful death; that, further, it would be for his majesty's interest in future rather to acknowledge the services of his faithful friends and servants than to compass their destruction by those despicable means which had now been more than once employed against them.

On reading these words, the conscience-smitten king manifested the strongest signs of emotion, and his pride sunk beneath the deep humiliation which he suffered "Alas!" he cried, "the Duke only speaks the truth;" and such was his remorse, that suddenly laying aside his long-fostered hatred, he wrote back word, that if he had greatly erred in giving way to feelings of hostility against the noble Duke and his friend, he was now truly sorry for it, and was fully sensible of the fidelity and good-will they expressed for him, of which he trusted to give more convincing proofs in his future conduct. He entreated at the same time that Borso would be equally ready to enter into his views, and, as a pledge of their reconciliation, consent to release the unfortunate men who, at his instigation, had conspired against their noble benefactor.

When the Duke had perused the king's letter, "Time only will show," he cried, "what are the real dispositions of the king towards me and Ercole. As for his appeal to my generosity in favour of the prisoners, it is perfectly unnecessary, as I had already determined, without his interference, to pardon them I shall, however, do it with the greater readiness since we are of the same opinion upon the subject."

The wretched men were then ordered to be brought before the Duke, who, having first obtained the consent of Ercole, addressed them in the following words: "Your treacherous and ungrateful conduct amply merits a more severe punishment than it is in any human power to inflict. As I cannot do you justice, therefore, in that respect, I trust the compassion I mean to show you may be sufficient to overcome the base and heartless designs you entertained against your best friends. However little you may deserve it, you shall this day admit that I at least have learned how to temper my power, of which you wished to deprive me, with mercy, in pardoning the worst of malefactors. But should you repent of and amend your conduct, you may believe me when I say, that I shall never remind you of what has passed; the way is still open to our former favour and protection. Should you attempt to repeat your offence, you shall be held up to the world as a fearful and memorable example of the judgment of Heaven upon irreclaimable and inveterate vice. But now I forgive you, and my noble-minded friend, Ercole, forgives you, trusting that you will yet become worthy of your former selves, and give your friends reason rather to love and to honour you than to inflict upon you the penalties of the law." Here the Duke stopped, while, overpowered with a variety of feelings, the wretched men were unable to utter a word. Though snatched from the fate which awaited them, their shame and remorse were terrible. One of them at length, subduing his feelings, exclaimed in a voice scarcely audible: "Oh, my dear lord and master! the absolute devotion of our lives to your service and that of your noble house, under obligations almost as deep and lasting as we owe to Heaven itself, will be too little to express our gratitude We ventured hardly to look up to Heaven for mercy, and yet we have found it in the very persons against whom our arm was raised. Show us, then, only how we can lay down the lives you have so generously spared in some

way for your honour and interest," and the young man wept as he embraced the Duke's feet. But the latter, raising him up, pressed his hand affectionately in his own, observing the same manners towards the rest of the prisoners, whom after a few days he dismissed to their own abodes, where they were received by Ercole with every demonstration of kindness.

Not long after this act of clemency, Ercole, by the death of Borso, succeeded to the dukedom by the unanimous consent of the people; and the King of Naples, aware of his great prudence and bravery, bestowed his daughter upon him in marriage. And when the Venetians declared war against Ferrara, the Duke was so well supported, that the republic, after a long and severe struggle, was induced to propose a fresh treaty of peace.

FIRST DECADE. NOVELLA IX.[1]

THERE was a Greek merchant from Corfu, who having trafficked in various parts of Italy, at length settled in Mantua. His name was Filargiro, one of the most avaricious characters in the world; for though he had realised a handsome property, all his thoughts were bent upon amassing more and more, his avarice still increasing with the increase of his wealth. It happened that on returning one day from a sale of some of his goods, with a purse of four hundred gold crowns, while engaged in transacting other business, he was unlucky enough to lose the whole sum, nor was he aware of his loss until he reached home. Arriving there, he opened an immense chest containing many thousand crowns, and on preparing to add the four hundred to the number, he was struck dumb with astonishment to find that they were gone. He uttered an exclamation of horror every time he put his hand into each of his pockets, till convinced at last that his loss was but too true, he ran off in great consternation along the path he had come, inquiring of the very dogs he met on the way whether they had seen or seized upon his treasure. He was quite confounded when he reached the place where he had first received the money, without obtaining the least tidings of it. Almost overwhelmed with despair, he suddenly bethought him, as a last resource, to apply to the Marquis, entreating that a public crier might be instantly sent forth, and offering the sum of forty crowns for the recovery of his treasure. With great courtesy the Marquis acceded to his request, expressing himself at the same time concerned to witness the excessive affliction under which the unfortunate Filargiro seemed to labour. The reward was accordingly proclaimed, and the gold soon afterwards made its appearance in the hands of one of those aged old ladies, who, being great devotees, always walk with their eyes upon the ground

[1] This story is taken from the sixteenth of Petrus Alphonsus, in which we have a philosopher instead of the Marquis of Mantua. The merchant likewise pretends that there were two golden serpents, though he only advertised the loss of one, which made his deceit more flagrant, as the omission was less probable. This story has been imitated in innumerable tales and facetiæ, both French and Italian (History of Fiction, vol. ii. p. 434.)

as they come from church. In this way she discovered the lost treasure, and fearful lest her conscience should be loaded with such a weight of gold, though extremely poor, she would have been very greatly perplexed in what way to act, had she not luckily heard the crier announcing the reward of forty crowns, which she hoped she might receive with a safe conscience. Observing her destitute appearance, the Marquis very humanely inquired whether she had any means of procuring her subsistence, and whether she had no one to assist her. "I have nothing," she replied, "but what I gain by the work of my hands and the help of one daughter; we weave and spin, signor, to earn as much as we want, living in the fear of the Lord in the best way we are able. My daughter, to be sure, I should wish to see married before I die, but I have nothing to give her for a portion." The Marquis, on hearing the poor woman's account of herself, highly praised her integrity in thus restoring what she might so easily have reserved for herself and for a marriage-portion for her daughter; observing that it was an action of which he feared that few others, under the same temptation, would have been capable. He then summoned the merchant, informing him that the lost treasure was found, and requesting him at the same time to put into the poor woman's hands the stated reward The raptures of the miser were truly amusing when he beheld and seized upon the gold, even in the presence of the Marquis; but on hearing the demand of the stipulated sum, his countenance again fell, and he began to think how he could possibly withhold the promised reward. Having numbered the pieces once or twice exactly over, though he found them perfectly correct, he turned towards the old woman, saying, "There are four-and-thirty ducats short of the sum which I put into this bag." The old lady appeared extremely confused at this accusation, exclaiming in a distressed tone to the Marquis, "Oh, signor, can that be possible? Is it likely I should have stolen thirty-four ducats, when I had it in my power to possess myself of the whole? No; believe me, noble signor, I swear, as I value my hopes of heaven, that I have restored the exact sum which I found on my return from church; not a single farthing have I taken out" But the miserly old wretch continuing to affirm most solemnly that the ducats were in the same bag with the crowns, and that she must consider them as a sufficient remuneration, the affair seemed to perplex the Marquis not a little. Yet when he reflected that the old miser had only mentioned the four hundred crowns in the first instance, he began to suspect his design of imposing upon the poor woman in order to save the paltry sum offered as a reward. The Marquis felt the utmost indignation at the discovery of this deceit, believing no punishment to be too severe for this despicable breach of faith; but checking his rising passion for a moment, he reflected that the most effectual chastisement he could bestow upon the miser's attempt to impose upon the magistracy would be to make him fall into the very snare he had laid for another. With this view he thus addressed the merchant: "And why did you not mention the full amount of your loss before proclaiming the reward?" "I overlooked it; I quite forgot it," was the reply. "But it seems somewhat strange

that you, who appear so particular about trifles, should not have recollected the circumstance of the ducats. And as far as I can understand, you wish to recover what is not your own. I mean to say that this bag of gold could never have belonged to you at all, since the sum you first mentioned is not to be found in it. I imagine the real owner to be myself, since a servant of mine lost exactly the sum here contained on the very same day you pretend to have lost yours." The Marquis then turned towards the old woman, observing, "Since it is clear that the money is none of his, but mine, and you have had the good luck to find it, pray keep it: the whole is your own; present it as a wedding-gift to your daughter. If it should happen that you meet with another purse, containing the ducats as well as the crowns, belonging to this gentleman, I beg you will return it to him without demanding any reward." The poor lady expressed her gratitude to the Marquis for this generous mark of his favour, and promised to observe his directions in everything. The wretched merchant, finding that the Marquis had truly penetrated into his motives, and that there was not a chance of succeeding in his nefarious design, declared that he was now quite willing to pay the reward he had promised, if she restored the remaining money, which was indisputably his own. But it was now too late. The Marquis turning towards him with an angry air, threatened to punish him for such a disgraceful attempt to defraud another of so large a sum, since, from his own account, it could not possibly be his. "Get out of my presence, and beware how you exasperate me further. If this good woman should be fortunate enough to meet with the purse, with the exact amount you mention, she has promised to restore it to you untouched. That I think is enough."

Without venturing to answer a single word, the unhappy Filargiro was compelled to leave the place, unaccompanied by his newly-recovered treasure, and filled with sorrow and regret at having refused to fulfil the conditions he had made. The poor old woman, on the other hand, went away overjoyed with her unexpected good fortune, and full of gratitude to the Marquis. She hastened to impart the happy tidings to her daughter, who, after having long indulged a vain attachment, had at length the pleasure of being united to the object of her choice, at the expense of the avaricious old merchant.

FIFTH DECADE, NOVELLA IV

At the period when the celebrated Giovanni Trivulzi was appointed by the king of France governor of Milan, the capital city of Lombardy, a certain noble youth resided there of the name of Giovanni Panigarola, whose bold and fiery temper involved him in frequent disputes, both with the soldiers and the citizens, to the no slight interruption of the public peace. This unruly disposition having more than once caused him to be brought before the governor at the instance of several individuals with whom he had been engaged, he would probably have incurred the punishment due to his indiscretion, had not

the venerable Trivulzi been more desirous of reforming offenders than of punishing them. Discharging him merely with a severe reprimand, out of regard to the feelings of the youth's family and friends, he trusted that he should hear of him no more. But this unfortunately was not the case; the perverse and ungrateful youth still pursuing the same perilous career in spite of the entreaties and reproaches of his best friends. Even his union with a pleasing and accomplished young lady of Lampogiani, named Filippa, failed to convince him of the folly of his conduct · her tenderness and anxiety were lavished upon him in vain, and she lived in daily expectation of hearing of some calamitous event. Though he always treated her with the utmost kindness and affection, she would rather have been herself the victim of his quarrelsome and unhappy disposition, than have heard of his indulging it at the expense of others, and at the imminent risk of his own life. Unable to support this incessant anxiety, the fond Filippa would frequently conjure him to abstain from thus wantonly hazarding his reputation and her own repose, for the sake of encouraging so idle and dangerous a propensity, which cost her so many tears. Then throwing her fair arms around him, she declared that she could not long live under the torments she endured on his behalf, being in hourly dread of beholding him borne homewards a lifeless corpse. "I had rather," she exclaimed, "that you would at once pierce my bosom with your sword than listen to the sad accounts I am daily expecting to hear of you; so derogatory to your own honour and the name you bear, and frequently, I fear, so unjust towards the objects of your resentment. I entreat you, therefore, by our long attachment, by all my unutterable love and devotion to you, that, if you have any pity or gentleness in your nature, you will henceforth become more reasonable, and avoiding occasions of embroiling yourself with others, consent to lead the blameless and honourable life for which your abilities and your connections are in every way so well calculated to qualify you. Then, and then only, shall I consider myself truly happy, blest with your society, and enjoying the honour and respectability of your name."

Whilst listening to the kind and judicious words of her he loved, Giovanni sincerely promised reformation, and believed that he could renounce all his errors, and never more give her reason to complain. But when he was again exposed to temptations, when his boon companions repeatedly invited him, and, half mad with wine, he received imaginary insults from the guests, borne away by the force of his habitual passions, he quickly gave or as quickly received offence. About this time, the kind governor, Trivulzi, was recalled to France, and one of a more severe and implacable disposition soon after assumed his place. Nor was it long before the luckless Giovanni embroiled himself in a hot dispute with an officer of the governor's guards, until, proceeding from words to blows, they drew their daggers, and his adversary in a few seconds lay dead at Giovanni's feet. He was speedily secured by several other officers who had witnessed the fact, and being carried before the new governor, was condemned on the following day to lose his head. When these tidings reached the

ears of his poor wife, so far from being prepared by all her former fears for so fatal an occurrence, she gave way to the extremity of wretchedness and despair. Inveighing against the cruelty of the governor, her own and her husband's unhappy fate, she beat her bosom, she tore her hair, and refused the consolations of her nearest relatives. "I will not be comforted," she exclaimed in a tone of agony, "you do not, you cannot know, the sufferings I endure; and may God, in His infinite mercy, grant that none of you ever may! Away, away, then, and attempt not to assuage the burning agony I feel. It is worse than death; and death I could suffer a thousand times rather than my husband should thus wretchedly and ignominiously end his days."

Fearing lest she might be induced by the excess of her feelings to put a period to her existence, her friends were unwilling to leave her for a moment alone; yet finding their attempts to console her were vain, they stood silently about her couch, until the object of their solicitude having wearied herself with her lamentations, came at length to the resolution of either saving her beloved husband or perishing in the attempt. With this view she declared to her friends around her that the only means of mitigating her sorrow would be to procure for her a final interview with her husband, that she might at least have the sad consolation of bidding him an eternal farewell. Compassionating her forlorn condition, they all united in soliciting their husbands and brothers to endeavour to obtain this favour from the governor; and it was permitted that during that night she might share the unhappy youth's imprisonment. Great was the emotion experienced on both sides when they met: she threw herself into his arms, and her tender reproaches half died away on her lips. "Alas! alas! to what a state has your inconsiderate conduct reduced us! Have I lived to hear that to-morrow you are condemned to suffer death, and that I am doomed to live in the consciousness of such a sad and widowed lot! Ah, why did you not sooner yield to the repeated entreaties and reproaches of your unhappy wife? Did I not tell you that some fatal consequence would be sure, sooner or later, to follow? It is come, and you have sacrificed life upon life to your wicked and infatuated career. It is enough; and we have now to pay the forfeit of all your folly and of all——I fear, alas! I fear to speak it to one who should have time to repent ere yet he die:" and her sobs here interrupting her voice, she gave way to a fresh burst of sorrow. He who had before appeared unmoved and collected was now melted even to tears on witnessing the deep sorrow of his wife, knowing how fondly she was attached to him, and how ill able she was to sustain the sorrows in store for her. "My own Filippa," he cried, gently raising her up. "I am sorry for you from the bottom of my soul; but try to calm yourself: why distress yourself thus for me? You see I am not terrified at the fate which awaits me. I had rather thus die for having conducted myself valiantly against the brutal wretch who insulted me, than live ignominiously among my fellow-citizens under the control of the soldiers who domineer over us. One, at least, has paid the forfeit of his crime. Console yourself, therefore, my Filippa, seeing that I die honourably,

and not like a false traitor or a bandit, but in the noble attempt to tame the ferocity of those who too nearly resemble them. It was the slave of the cruel governor who first provoked me to do the deed; nor could I have received the insulting language he made use of without covering myself with eternal infamy. Then mourn not over my fate; approve yourself worthy of my love; and as you have ever shown yourself a sweet and obedient wife, so even now obey me in summoning fortitude and patience to bear our lot;" and kissing her tenderly, he sought to console her by every means in his power. But his kindness seeming only to increase her grief, she declared that she should never be able to survive the affliction of losing him thus, and that she was resolved to save him or to perish in the attempt "Therefore," she continued, "am I come; and as I trust that the sufferings we have experienced in this trying scene will have made some impression on your mind, instead of further indulging these womanish complaints, we will summon fortitude to avail ourselves of the last resource which fortune has left in our power." "How! what is it you mean?" inquired her astonished husband. "That you should hasten to avoid the fate prepared for you by disguising yourself in these clothes, which I have brought hither for the purpose. Lose not a moment, for as we are nearly of the same age, and I am not much lower in stature than you, the deception will not easily be detected, and in my dress you may make your escape. The guards are all newly appointed and unacquainted with your person. Once safe yourself, indulge not the least anxiety about me. I am innocent, and, vindictive as he may be, the governor will not venture to shed innocent blood." "We cannot tell that," replied Giovanni, "and the very possibility of it is sufficient to make me decline your kind and noble-hearted offer Should he even threaten you with death, my Filippa, the governor would be certain to have me in his hands again to-morrow. So say no more of this, my love,' he continued, as he kissed away her fast falling tears, "and do not believe that I would thus vilely fly, as if I were afraid to meet my fate. What will the world, what will my dearest friends and fellow-citizens say, when they hear that I have absconded, at the risk of your life, and thus confirmed the worst reports of my adversaries? No, Filippa, never. let me here terminate my restless days rather than in any way endanger yours, which are far more precious in my eyes.'

But the affliction and despair exhibited by his gentle wife on hearing these words were such as may be easier imagined than expressed; nor did she cease uttering the most wild and incoherent lamentations, until, entertaining fears for her reason, he retracted his purpose and promised to favour her design. And as she now assisted him, between sobs and smiles, to assume his female attire, she declared that she could have borne the thought of his death fighting bravely in the field, or in any way except by the hands of the public executioner "It would then," said she, "have been my duty to support myself, but the very idea of your dear life being thus thrown, like a wild weed, away, would have embittered all my future existence. For I recollect having frequently heard my honoured father say, and he was one of the

most valiant and high minded of our citizens, that the truly brave ought never to shun death when a noble occasion offers of serving either their country or their friends, but that it must be truly grievous to the wretch who is compelled to meet it unsupported by any generous enterprise or any sense of honour. And alas! I fear you would at last feel yourself too much in the latter situation; and for myself, I should doubly feel it So now, dearest love, I entreat you to use every precaution in your power to avoid discovery and effect your escape, breathe not a syllable to any one till you are beyond the reach of danger; consent not to gratify the cruelty of the governor, but save yourself for more honourable enterprises, which may confound the malice of your enemies;" and saying this, she conjured him to hasten away.

Taking a hasty farewell, therefore, Giovanni bound his cloak more closely about him, and presented himself, just as the morning dawned, before the sentinels of the prison Believing him to be the lady on her return from her husband, he was allowed to pass without examination or suspicion. In the morning the officers entered the prison to bind the hands of the culprit and lead him forth to execution, when the lady, turning suddenly round upon them, inquired, with an air of authority, whether they had been commissioned to treat her with this indignity. On discovering her sex, and after searching every part of the prison for the real offender in vain, the governor was immediately made acquainted with the truth. He ordered her to be instantly conducted into his presence, in the utmost rage at the idea of having been thus overreached by a woman; and so far from commiserating her situation, he threatened her with the severest punishment, declaring that her life should answer for his, and commanding the officers upon their duty to proceed to the place of execution. Thither then the devoted wife was carried, in spite of her tears and entreaties and those of the surrounding people, among whom tidings of the fact having quickly gone forth, a vast concourse of each sex and of all ages were speedily assembled. Mingled sorrow and admiration were depicted on every countenance, and each manly breast burned with admiration of a woman of such exalted fidelity and truth, and with a wish to rescue her from so unmerited a doom. But every where surrounded by the tyrant's satellites, the wretched lady, invoking the name of her husband, and appealing for justice and mercy in vain, now approached the scene of her execution, and, amidst the horror and indignation of the spectators, was on the point of sealing her unexampled fidelity with her life. At this moment a loud cry was heard amongst the spectators, a sword flashed above the heads of the people, and the tumult approaching nearer, Giovanni issued from the crowd, and the next moment had rescued his beloved wife from the soldiers' hands. Yet fearful lest any act of violence might involve them both in the same fate, he instantly surrendered his sword, and embracing his weeping wife, said "Did I not tell you that I would never permit you to fall a victim to your incomparable generosity and truth? Unhand her, wretches!" he cried, turning towards the officers; "I am your prisoner and those bonds are only mine." "No! obey the governor's

commands," cried the lady, "it is I who am sentenced to suffer; venture not to dispute his orders. No, I will not be released," she continued, as they were about to set her free; and a scene of mutual tenderness and devotion then took place which drew tears from the hardest heart.

In the meantime the governor, having heard of the arrival of Giovanni, with the same unrelenting cruelty gave orders that both should be executed on the spot, the husband for the homicide he had committed, and his consort for effecting the release of the criminal from prison. The indignation of the citizens on hearing this inhuman sentence could no longer be controlled. An instantaneous attack was made upon the soldiers and officers of the guard, who were prevented from proceeding with their cruel purpose, while numbers rushed towards the mansion of the governor, declaring that they would have justice, and insisting that the whole affair should be laid before the king. Though highly enraged at this popular interference with his sanguinary measures, the governor was compelled to bend before the storm, and with evident reluctance submitted to refer the matter to his royal master. This was no other than the celebrated Francis, whose singular magnanimity, united to his pleasing and courteous manners, still render him so justly dear to the French people.

On receiving an account of the noble and generous manner in which the lady had conducted herself, and of the worth and valour of her husband, with the proofs of mutual fidelity and affection which they had displayed, King Francis, with his usual liberality and clemency, issued his commands that they should instantly, without any further proceedings, be set at liberty. He, moreover, expressed his high admiration of their mutual truth and constancy, and approved of the good feeling and spirit evinced by the Milanese people, declaring his only regret to be, that it was not in his power to render such examples of heroic worth as immortal as they deserved to be. After a more strict investigation of the unhappy affair in which Giovanni had been last engaged, it was discovered that his adversary had really been the aggressor, and had instigated him, both by words and blows, to the terrible revenge which he had taken, in prosecuting which, at the risk of his own life, he had laid the insulting soldier dead at his feet.

Great was the triumph of the people of Milan when the tidings of the pardon of the prisoners arrived, and they paraded the streets with shouts of applause in honour of King Francis, whose clemency and magnanimity failed not to add to his popularity among all ranks. Nor was the rage and disappointment of the bad governor inferior to the joy of the people upon this occasion, as he beheld the procession bearing the happy pair in triumph to their home. The inhabitants instantly despatched a deputation to the French monarch, expressing their grateful sense of his kindness, and their devoted attachment to his royal person.

Such, likewise, was the favourable impression made upon the character of Giovanni by this occurrence, that, influenced also by the excel-

lent example of his wife, he from that period entirely abandoned the dangerous courses which he had so long pursued.[1]

SEVENTH DECADE, NOVELLA IX.

AFTER the death of Leo the Tenth, the Holy See long remained vacant, owing to the want of unanimity of opinion among the cardinals, who were unwilling to advance to the papal dignity any one of those sitting in the conclave, such were their clashing interests This division afterwards led to the promotion of Adriano, who had most probably never dreamed of such an honour during the whole course of his life

During the interim there arose many serious tumults and disturbances in Rome, and more especially in the immediate vicinity, where the woods and roads were on all sides infested with banditti, so that no travellers could pass with safety from place to place. Although the Government exercised the utmost vigilance in repressing these disorders, their authors still found an asylum in the caves and mountains, whence they only issued to fall like wild beasts upon their prey, and woful was the fate of those who fell into their hands. It was during this period that Adriano arrived at Rome to assume the pontifical chair, and having arranged the internal affairs of the city, he attended to the complaints of the increasing disorders in the vicinity, resolving to take measures to extirpate the whole race of banditti out of his dominions. Summoning the head of the police to his presence, to him he committed the charge, as the most courageous and prudent officer he knew, of penetrating into the hidden retreats and fastnesses occupied by these ferocious men After receiving his commission, the officer immediately provided himself with a select company, both of horse and foot, ready furnished with all kinds of arms and equipments, and attended by a vast number of the fiercest dogs, as if he had been about to make an expedition to clear the woods and mountains of the beasts of prey On arriving pretty near their haunts, his first object was to draw a line of circumvallation around the strong places which he had ascertained to be the chief rendezvous of the banditti; and then gradually drawing into a narrower circle, with strong nets so spread as to prevent escape, he advanced to the sound of horns and bugles, mingled with the shouts of men and baying of the dogs, to rouse these human monsters from their lairs. The better to discover them, they now urged on the blood-hounds to the track, which soon obliged the robbers to show themselves and assume an attitude of defence. The officer commenced a vigorous assault, and after a sharp contest, in which several were killed, the robbers, intimidated by supe-

[1] The stratagem which conjugal affection here suggests to the wife of the criminal has been more than once successfully practised in real life The two most memorable instances are those of the Earl of Nithsdale, who by this means escaped from the Tower in 1716, and Count La Valette, whose deliverance under the same circumstances at Paris is fresh in the public recollection

rior numbers and the shouts of men and the baying of dogs, took to flight, each attempting to save himself in the best way he could. Upon this a strange scene presented itself, for the dogs, encouraged by their flight, pursued them with the utmost fury, running by their side, and seizing them by the legs or throat, which compelled the men to wheel round and engage them with their sabres. Whichever way they fled, they still found themselves surrounded at all points by dogs, and nets, and swords, from which they vainly endeavoured to extricate themselves. In this manner they continued to be gradually enclosed within a still narrower space, and their whole number being thus brought together, they again resolved to make a desperate stand. Though they fought with the strength of despairing men, it was still of no avail, and having no further place of refuge, they were all either killed or taken upon the spot. The survivors were hanged upon the nearest trees, without the least trial or any investigation into their crimes, while their bodies were left a prey to the wolves and vultures of the mountains.

Out of the whole number there were only about twenty who contrived to elude the vigilance of the wary and valiant officer and his men. These were some who, on hearing their first approach from a neighbouring wood, and alarmed by the sound of bugles and the clamour of the battle, concluding their comrades had fallen, fled as far as possible from their accustomed haunts. They at length drew up at an inn several miles distant, with the intention of there awaiting tidings of the result, having previously arrayed themselves in the rich dresses which had formerly belonged to more honourable personages. To give a greater air of probability to their new characters, a few of them had remained in their usual attire, the better to personate servants who were attending upon their masters. Their leader appeared as one of the servants, perfectly aware of the magnitude of the danger and quite on the alert. The gentlemen entered first, with a rolling and idle motion of their limbs, calling for rooms and whatever the house could afford of the best, while their servants waited humbly at a distance

In the meanwhile the officer having despatched his sanguinary business in the wood, gathered up his nets and the spoils of victory, proposing to proceed in the same manner and enclose the adjacent thicket. In his progress, however, he encountered a shepherd, who informed him that he would only lose his labour by repeating the same operation, as he had just met a party of the banditti, dressed like gentlemen, coming out of the wood on their way to Naples. The officer, being resolved to ascertain the truth of this account, sent forward one of his spies to obtain information, following him at an easy pace. The man proceeded until he arrived at the very inn where the gentlemen had put up, and introducing himself as a stranger, he ordered dinner to be prepared The gentlemen, however, wishing to be thought courteous, invited him to dine with them, and entering into conversation, when they found he was going on to Naples, inquired if he had lately heard anything new. "Nothing very new, signor," replied the stranger, "except that as I came out of Rome, I happened

to meet the brave head of the police returning, and he told me that he had just made such complete havoc amongst the banditti, that he believed there was not one left alive" Overjoyed on hearing this, the villains began to think themselves quite secure; for the officer, they believed, had now returned home, supposing they had all fallen into his hands.

After dinner the stranger got up, saying that he must proceed to Naples, but returning instantly to his employer, he informed him that he had found the robbers enjoying themselves at the inn. In a very short space of time the brave officer was also there; but just as he was about to enter, the leader of the robbers, standing behind his pretended master's chair near the window, observed the concourse of people at hand, among whom he marked also the identical stranger who had just left them. He was on the point of acquainting his companions, when he reflected that all means of escape being cut off, he should only implicate himself in their fate in the tumult which would ensue. As a last effort to save himself, he therefore only observed to his master, "I tasted an excellent wine just now in the cellar, and I think, signor, it would suit your taste I will step and see that the host plays you fair about it;" saying which, and carrying a huge dish before him, he somewhat promptly left the apartment. As he went downstairs he met the officer and his myrmidons coming up, who supposing him to be one of the servants of the house, inquired in what manner the strange gentlemen above were then employed. "They are still at table," he answered, in a pert tone, "and I am just going to bring them some more wine" "Well, go, you rogue," returned the other, "and we will drink it" "As you please for that, gentlemen," answered the waiter, and hastened as quickly as possible into the vault, thence exploring his way out by a secret passage, until he found himself in a place of safety.

The officer had by this time seized and secured the party of gentlemen at table, and taking possession of their seats, ordered a fresh dinner, every moment expecting the excellent wine which the rogue of a waiter had promised to bring At length, turning to the host, he desired to know what that waiter of his, whom they had met on the stairs, was so very long about "No waiter of mine is gone for wine, signor, he belonged to the party of gentlemen whom you have just seized" "Ah! can that be true?" cried the officer. "It is, it is!" cried the whole band, as if displeased that he was not to share the same fate. "He was our servant, that is, he was our captain, we mean. In that disguise he has imposed both upon you and upon us For, seeing you at hand, as we have reason to believe, he pretended to go for wine, and left us, without saying a word, to fall into your hands, escaping from the fate which he saw prepared for his companions, and thus showing himself as prudent as we have been vain and foolish"

Enraged at the idea of having been thus outwitted by the chief of the gang, whom he was in particular desirous of securing, the officer everywhere sought to discover his retreat, but in vain. He was at length compelled to return with his other prisoners to Rome, where

the unfortunate gentlemen immediately shared the fate of their companions.

The sole survivor of the gang, who by his coolness and penetration had saved himself, succeeded in secretly leaving the Papal dominions, and retired beyond the jurisdiction of the Church into the Florentine territories. He had there time to repent, and abandoning the wicked career upon which he had first entered, he became a very honest citizen, and an example of sobriety, industry, and charity to all his neighbours.

Novels of Anton-Francesco Grazzini.

ducing his stories. Instead of availing himself, like Cinthio and so many others, of the example of Boccaccio, which produced a host of servile imitators, who would seem to have caught everything but the exquisite ease and spirit of their original, Lasca feigns that during the pontificate of Paul III., and in the reign of those great princes, Charles V. and Francis I., a party of young people met together one afternoon at the house of a rich widow lady, in order to visit her brother, then residing with her, one of the most amiable young men in all Florence, and who being passionately fond of music, possessed a collection of the finest musical instruments and melodies for the entertainment of his young friends. While engaged on this occasion in performing a little concert, the sky suddenly becomes overcast, and a heavy snowstorm follows, of which the company take advantage to amuse themselves by assailing one another with snowballs. When wearied with their other sports, they assemble round their evening fire, and as a last resource, it is suggested that they should attempt to beguile the time until the hour of supper with relating these stories. As the notice, however, is so very short, the tales of their first winter evening are soon told; and it is therefore agreed, after the preparation of a week or two, to assemble again in order to regale themselves with other stories of greater length. Whether they had ever the pleasure of hearing these remains a secret, as it is certain that many of them never made their appearance, having either been altogether lost or continuing still unedited, if yet in existence.

The second evening, comprehending ten stories, was first edited in 1743, and was afterwards republished, along with the first evening, at Paris, though with the date of London, in 1756. "The ninth of the second night," says Mr. Dunlop, "corresponds with the seventh of Firenzuola, and the tenth with a tale of Fortini. The last story contains an account of a cruel, and by no means ingenious trick, practised by Lorenzo de' Medici on a physician of Florence."

The death of Lasca occurred in 1583, in the 80th year of his age.

SECOND EVENING, NOVELLA I

We learn from ancient accounts of Pisa, that it was formerly esteemed one of the most wealthy and powerful cities, not only of Tuscany, but of all Italy, and celebrated for the courage and activity of its inhabitants. It happened that, a considerable time previous to its subjugation by the Florentine republic, a certain Milanese doctor, who had been studying medicine at Paris, came for a short time to take up his residence there. During his stay, he met with such uncommon success in his practice among the citizens, several of whom he had snatched from the very jaws of destruction, that, with fees and reputation increasing upon him so fast, he scarcely thought himself justified in leaving a place to the customs and manners of whose inhabitants he was already becoming attached. He therefore felt inclined to abandon his native city altogether, and very shortly ceased even to

think that there was such a place as Milan in the world. For he had heard, only a few days before his arrival at Pisa, that his aged mother, the sole relation whom he had left behind, had departed this life. So he believed that he could do nothing better than continue where he was, and at no distant period, by his industry and success, he amassed a considerable fortune, took an elegant house, and assumed the dignified title of Maestro Basilio da Milano

Soon after he had the pleasure of having it frequently hinted to him by several respectable Pisanese that the honour of his alliance would by no means be unacceptable to them, and many were the young beauties who passed in review before him. Yet he at length fixed his eyes upon a young lady, both of whose parents were deceased, and who, though not rich, was of a good family. She brought the doctor little more as her wedding portion than the house she lived in, though she afterwards presented him with a large family; and for many years, increasing in wealth, they lived extremely happily together. By this lady he had three sons and a daughter, the latter of whom, as well as one of her brothers, their parents very happily bestowed in marriage when they became old enough to settle in the world. The youngest boy had a decided taste for letters, while the second, who gave his parents great anxiety, was of an extremely dull and obstinate disposition, with a great aversion to learning and every species of improvement; morose, abstracted, and unamiable, when his negative was once pronounced, it was as unalterable as his own nature. The doctor at last finding that he could mould him into nothing, to get rid of him, sent him into the country, where he had purchased at least half a dozen different estates, and whither he was fond of retiring to escape the continued noise and turbulence of the city. But about ten years after he had despatched his son Lazzaro—for this was the fool's name—into this retreat, there arose a dreadful malady in Pisa, which carried off numbers of people in a violent fever, which subsiding into a deep lethargy, they awakened no more, and it was, moreover, as infectious as the plague. The doctor, desirous of showing his skill, and taking the lead of the other physicians on this occasion, exposed himself so fearlessly for his fees, that he took the infection, which soon set at defiance every application of his most esteemed syrups and recipes, and in a few hours he retired from the profession for ever. Nor was this all, for he communicated the disease to his family, and one after another they all died, until there was only an old nurse left alive in the house.

It was indeed a dreadful visitation upon all Pisa, and the mortality would have been still greater had not the survivors fled in haste from the city. With the change of season, however, its severity seemed to mitigate, the persons attacked gradually recovered, the inhabitants returned to their houses, and the people resumed their usual occupations

It was now that Lazzaro succeeded to all the property left by his deceased relations, though he merely added a single domestic to the reduced establishment of his father, consisting only of the old servant. His farms and the receipt of his rents were left in the care of an

agent, as he bestowed no attention upon business. Many families, notwithstanding, appeared anxious for the honour of his alliance, without making the slightest objection to his rusticity and folly; but the only answer that he uniformly returned to these proposals was, that he had made up his mind to wait for at least four years, and that he afterwards might perhaps be induced to think of it. As he was known never to have changed his mind, no one importuned him further upon the subject. Though he was fond of amusements in his own way, he admitted no one to his confidence, and started on beholding a card of invitation like a guilty spirit at the sign of the cross.

Opposite to his house there resided a man of the name of Gabriello, with his wife and two children, a boy about five years old and a little girl, whom he supported as well as he was able by his skill in bird-catching and fishing. Though his abode was humble, his nets and cages were of the very best construction, and he managed them so judiciously, that, with the assistance of his wife, Santa, who had the reputation of an excellent sempstress, he made a very pretty livelihood. It happened that Gabriello was an exact counterpart in voice, countenance, and appearance of our foolish friend Lazzaro; their very complexion and their beards were of the same cut and quality. If they were not twin brothers, they ought to have been so, for they were not only of the same age and stature, but in their taste and manners they greatly resembled each other. It would have been impossible even for the fisherman's wife to have recognised Lazzaro disguised in the dress of her husband; the only distinction that could be made was that one was dressed as a labourer and the other like a gentleman. Pleased with the happy resemblance which he could not but acknowledge between himself and the fisherman, and fancying it laid him under a sort of obligation for which he felt grateful, he began to solicit his acquaintance. This he did in the pleasantest manner possible, frequently sending him good things from his table and a bottle of old wine. The fisherman's gratitude was so pleasing that he soon also sent for him to dine and sup with him, passing the evenings in the most agreeable conversations imaginable; the adventures of the good fisherman, and the prodigious lies he told, being a never-failing source of admiration and delight to Lazzaro. For the fisherman's skill extended far beyond his art, and the rogue contrived to insinuate himself into the good graces of his patron, until the latter was hardly ever easy out of his company.

Thus having one day treated his rustic friend to a noble feast, they began to talk, over their wine, of the various modes of fishing, all of which were explained greatly to the satisfaction of the host. None, however, seemed to take his fancy so much as the description of the diving net, on which the fisherman dwelt with uncommon enthusiasm, as the most useful and delightful invention in the world. It inspired Lazzaro with the ambition of immediately witnessing a specimen of this part of the piscatory art, in which great fish may be caught, not with nets and lines merely, but with the very mouth, a drag-net hanging round the neck of the diving fisherman! "Oh, let us go now! let us go now!" exclaimed the happy Lazzaro, while the guest, as

usual, expressed himself ready to attend his patron. As it happened to be the middle of summer, nothing could be better; and finishing their dessert, Gabriello took his drag-nets and they went out together. They bent their way through the Porta à Mare directly towards the Arno, along the fence of pales, above the great bank crowned with alder-trees, spreading a most delicious shade. There the fisherman begged his patron to sit down and refresh himself while he observed the manner in which he should proceed. Having first stripped himself, he bound the nets round his arms and neck, and then, boldly plunging into the river, down he went. But being a complete adept at his business, he rose again very shortly to the surface, bringing up with him at one drag, eight or ten great fish, all of the best kind. This was a real miracle in the eyes of Lazzaro, who could not divine how he could possibly see to catch them under water, and he resolved to ascertain the manner in which it was done. With this view, being a hot July day, and thinking that a cold bath might refresh him, he prepared, with Gabriello's assistance, to step in. He was conducted by him to a shallow part, and when about up to his knees, Gabriello left him to his own discretion, only warning him that though the bottom shelved down very gradually, he had better go no farther than where a certain post rose above the rest; and pointing it out to him once more, he pursued his business Lazzaro felt singular pleasure in being thus left to himself, and splashing about, performed all sorts of antics in the water. His eyes were often fixed in admiration upon his friend Gabriello, who every now and then rose from the bottom with a fish in his mouth, the better to please his patron, who at this sight could no longer restrain his applause.

"It is very plain now," he cried, "that it must be light under water, or he could never have seen how to catch that fish in his mouth, besides all the others in his net. I wish I knew how." So saying, the next time that he saw Gabriello dive, he imitated the motion by ducking his head, and at the same time losing his footing, slipped gently down, till he not only reached the post, but passed it with his head still under water. When he fairly got out of his depth, still trying whether he could see, it appeared a strange thing to him; for he found he could no longer get his breath, and he endeavoured in vain to fight his way up again, the water pouring in at his mouth and ears, at his nose and eyes, in such a way that he could see nothing. In short, the current at length catching him, bore him away in perfect amazement, and he was too far gone to cry out for help. Gabriello was in the meantime employed in diving down into a large hole he had discovered near the stakes, full of fish, which he was handing into his net with the greatest alacrity, while his poor friend and patron was already more than half dead, having now come up and gone down again for the third time, and at the fourth he rose no more.

Just at this moment, Gabriello, with a prodigious draught, again appeared, and turning round with a joyous face to look at Lazzaro, what was his surprise and terror when he found his master was gone! Gazing round with the hope of perceiving him somewhere, he only found his clothes, just as he had left them. In the utmost alarm he

ran again to the water, and in a short time discovered his body thrown by the current on the opposite bank He swam to the place, and on perceiving that his good patron was quite cold and lifeless, he stood for some moments like a statue, overpowered with grief and terror, without knowing how to act. In the first place he was afraid, if he published the tidings of his death, of being accused of having drowned him to plunder him of his money, an idea which threw him into such alarm, that covering his face with his hands, he stood buried in profound grief and reflection. At length he suddenly uttered an exclamation of joy, as the thought rushed into his mind, "I am safe! I am safe! There are no witnesses of the accident, and I know what I will do: it is the hour when, luckily, everybody is asleep" With these words he thrust the nets and the fish into his great basket, and taking the dead body of Lazzaro on his shoulders, heavy as it was, he placed it among some wet reeds hard by the shore. He then bound the nets round his poor friend's arms, and again bearing him to the water, he contrived to fasten the strings in such a way round one of the deepest stakes, that they could with difficulty be withdrawn, giving the body the appearance of having been thus entangled while fishing He then assumed his patron's attire, and got even into his very shoes, and sat down quietly on the bank, resolved to try what fortune would do for him. His strong resemblance to his deceased friend, if successful, would now not only save his life, but make it ever after, as he believed, most happy and comfortable As the hour seemed now arrived, with equal skill and courage, he entered upon the dangerous experiment, and began to call out lustily for help in the person of poor Lazzaro: "Help! help, good people, or the poor fisherman will be drowned! Oh, he comes up no more!" and with this he roared out tremendously. The miller was the first man who reached the spot, but numbers of people were gathering on all sides to learn what could possibly cause such an insufferable noise Gabriello continued to bellow even for some time after they arrived, the better to counterfeit his patron, weeping the whole time as he told his tale—how the poor fisherman had dipped, and brought up fish so often; but the last time he had stopped nearly an hour under water, and having waited for him in vain, he began to be afraid he was coming up no more. The people inquiring, with a smile at his simplicity, whereabouts it was, he pointed out the spot, on which the miller, who was a great friend of Gabriello's, began to strip, and plunged into the river. And there, sure enough, as he believed, he found his friend Gabriello caught in his own net, and entangled fast by his neck and heels to the unlucky stake.

"Heaven have mercy on us!" cried the miller; "here he is, poor Gabriello, poor Gabriello! quite drowned in his own entangled net," using his utmost efforts at the same time to loosen it from about the stake. Such were the lamentations of Gabriello's friends on hearing this, that he could scarcely refrain from betraying himself, Two more threw themselves into the water to assist the miller, and at length, with some difficulty, they fished the body out. The arms and legs were all entangled in the net, and his relations in their indignation

tore the unlucky cords to tatters. The tidings of his death being spread abroad, a priest immediately attended, and the body was borne upon a bier to the nearest church, where it was laid out in order to be recognised by Gabriello's friends. His disconsolate widow, accompanied by other relations bewailing him and her children, now hastened to the spot. Believing the body to be his, a scene of tender affliction ensued. After beating her breast and tearing her hair, she sat down and wept with her little children, while every one around, and above all the real Gabriello, could not restrain their tears. So overpowered indeed was he by his feelings, that pulling his poor patron's hat over his brows and hiding his face in his pocket-handkerchief, he addressed his wife before all the people in a hoarse and piteous voice. "Come, good woman, do not despair, do not cry so. I will provide for you, and take care both of you and your children; the poor man lost his life in trying to amuse me, and I shall not forget it. He was a clever fisherman; but leave off crying—I tell you I will provide for you. So go home, and go in peace, for you shall want for nothing while I live, and when I die I will leave you what is handsome;" and this he ended with a kind of growl, intended to express his concern both for her and the deceased fisherman. For these words he was highly applauded by all the people present, while the imaginary widow, somewhat consoled by his promises, was conveyed back by her relations to her own dwelling. But Gabriello in his new character immediately marched and took possession of Lazzaro's house, walking in exactly as he had often observed his poor friend was wont to do, without noticing any one. He went into a richly furnished chamber overlooking some beautiful gardens, and taking the keys out of his deceased patron's pockets, he began to search the trunks and boxes, where he found other lesser keys, which admitted him to all the treasures and valuables in the place. It was a storehouse of wealth indeed, for it not only contained the fortunes of the deceased doctor and other relations of Lazzaro, to the amount of several thousand florins of gold, but was equally rich in jewels and plate. At the sight of these Gabriello repressed with difficulty loud exclamations of rapture and surprise, and he sat down to devise fresh means of supporting his title to Lazzaro's estates. With this view, being perfectly acquainted with his late friend's character, he went down about supper-time uttering the most strange and wild exclamations of grief. The two servants of the house, who had heard of the fatal accident and the cause of it, ran hastily to his relief. But instead of listening to their consolation, he directly ordered six loaves and a portion of the supper, with two flasks of wine, to be carried to the disconsolate widow across the way. On the return of the domestic with the poor widow's grateful thanks, Gabriello partook of a light supper set out in the handsomest style, and, without saying a word to any one, shut himself up in his chamber and went to bed. There he remained until the hour of nine the next morning, in order the better to indulge his reflections and his grief. Though the difference between his voice and language and those of their former master was perceptible to his domestics, they attributed it entirely to his vio-

lent sorrow for his deceased friend. And the poor widow, finding how well he seemed inclined to keep his word of supporting her and her children, very soon dismissed the condolences of her relations and retired as usual quietly to rest. The next day Gabriello began to rise at his old friend's usual hour, and though he had now a variety of cares upon his hands, he never permitted the poor widow, Santa, to want for anything. He imitated his late patron's way of life very exactly, for he really seemed to have also succeeded to his indolence, which he adopted without an effort. He was still, however, extremely concerned to hear that his wife's grief for his death continued unabated, though he certainly felt flattered by it, and began to think in what way he could console her, and how he could contrive means to marry her again. Feeling not a little puzzled upon the subject, he resolved to go to her house, where he found her, accompanied by one of her cousins, it not being long since the period of his supposed death. Having informed her that he wished to speak to her upon an affair of some importance, her kind relation immediately took his leave, aware of the numerous obligations which her rich neighbour had so charitably conferred upon her When he had left them, Gabriello closed the door with the same air of familiarity and confidence as formerly, at which the poor woman could not help testifying some surprise, fearful lest he might presume too far upon the services he had rendered her. When Gabriello advanced, taking her little boy by the hand, she drew back timidly, at which action he could not help expressing his admiration of his wife's propriety in an audible voice and with a grin of delight. Then taking her by the hand, he spoke to her in his accustomed manner, and she gazed for a moment doubtfully in his face, while Gabriello, taking his little boy in his arms, tenderly caressed him, saying, "What, boy, is your mother weeping at our good fortune?" and shaking some money in his hand with a triumphant air, he gave it to him, and went on playing with him as usual. But perceiving that his wife was overpowered with a variety of emotions which she could not control, unable longer to disguise the truth, he first fastened the door, and, fearful lest any one might overhear the strange story he had to reveal, he drew her into an inner chamber, and there related the whole affair just as it had passed It is impossible to convey an idea of her surprise and joy as she hung weeping upon his neck But they were delicious tears, and her husband kissed them away with far greater rapture than he had ever before felt, and they sank overpowered with emotion into each other's arms.

It was necessary, however, to use the utmost precaution in retaining the fortune they had so strangely won, and after explaining the plans he had in view, and engaging his wife's promise to keep the matter secret, Gabriello returned to his new house His wife, still affecting to retain her grief for his loss, frequently took care, before all her neighbours, to recommend her poor children to the gentleman's notice, who uniformly treated them with kindness

The ensuing night he lay broad awake devising how he might best put his future plans into execution Having at length resolved, he rose early, and bent his way to the Church of Santa Catterina,

where he knew a venerable and devout monk, almost worshipped by the good people of Pisa, whose name was Fra Anselmo. He here announced a very strange and important piece of business, respecting which he wished to consult the conscience of the learned friar. The good father carried him into his cell, where Gabriello introduced himself as Lazzaro di Maestro Basilio da Milano, relating at the same time his whole family genealogy, and how he had remained sole heir of the whole property owing to the late plague. He at last came to the story of poor Gabriello, the fisherman, laying the sole blame of the accident upon himself in persuading the wretched man to accompany him in a fishing excursion along the Arno. He then proceeded to relate the deplorable circumstances in which he had left his family, and taking into serious consideration the cause of the calamity, he felt it weigh so heavily upon his conscience, that he was resolved at all risks to make every reparation in his power. But what reparation could be made to a woman, who, however lowly her condition, had fondly loved her husband, except by consoling her for her loss by directing her affections towards another object. "And the truth is," he continued, "I am willing to marry her, and become a father to her children, and then," he continued with the greatest simplicity, "perhaps God will forgive me for the great sin I committed in taking him out a fishing with me" Though the pious father here smiled, it appeared so conscientious a proposal that he did not venture to oppose it, saying that he would not fail in this way to obtain the mercy of Heaven upon many of his past sins. Hearing this comfortable doctrine, Gabriello opened his purse-strings and presented the friar with thirty pieces, observing that he wished the mass of San Gregorio to be sung for three Mondays together, to ensure peace to the soul of the deceased fisherman. The venerable monk's eyes brightened at the sight, and he promised mass should be sung the very next Monday. With respect to the projected alliance, he observed to Gabriello, that he rather praised him for his disregard to wealth and nobility in the proposed union "Make no account of it," he continued, "you will be rich enough in the grace of Heaven: we all belong to the same father and the same mother, and virtue is the only true nobility. I know both her and her parents; you could not do better, for she is born of a good family. So, go home, my good signor, and I will attend you when you please." "Well, to-day, to-day, then!" cried Gabriello, as he prepared to depart. "Ah! leave it to me," returned the friar, "and take my blessing with you, my son, and bring the ring in the meantime." Gabriello hastened home, and purchased the ring accordingly, persuading himself there could be no harm in making sure that everything was quite correct in the difficult circumstances under which he laboured. So, with the consent of all the lady's friends and relations, the marriage was celebrated a second time. Gabriello, in the person of Lazzaro, then conducted his wife to her new house, where a splendid feast was prepared, and all their friends met to receive them. Soon after, Gabriello gradually assuming the manners of a gentleman, dismissed the old maid and man-servant with liberal gratuities, and set up a handsome equipage and noble

establishment. He astonished all Lazzaro's friends with the striking improvement that had taken place in the simpleton's manners, while his wife, Santa, became exceedingly genteel in all her actions. The twice-married pair spent together a tranquil and happy life, and had two sons subsequently born, who, assuming a new family surname, called themselves De' Fortunati, and from these children sprung a race of men renowned both in letters and in arms.

NOVELLA VI.

THERE was formerly an honest citizen of Florence, known by the name of Guasparri del Calandra, by trade a gold-beater, and a pretty skilful master of his art. He was excessively good-natured, but withal of so thick and heavy an intellect, that he owed his good fortune chiefly to his marriage with a lady who had succeeded to two pleasant farms in the Prato and two houses in Florence. On this event he shut up his shop, resolving to lead a life of leisure in the country, with only one son, a boy about five years old, and his lady, who promised no further addition to his family. While residing at his villa, he entered into social terms with a gentlemen of the name of Scheggia, and, through him, with his friends Pilucca, Monaco, and Zoroastro. Delighted with their wit and spirit, for they were all boon companions of the first order, he frequently invited them, or went to sup with them at the residence of Pilucca in Via Scala, surrounded with pleasant gardens, where during summer they were wont to sup in the open air under the viny shade. Here Guasparri, having always piqued himself on his delicate knowledge of various wines, as well as on furnishing a sumptuous assortment of them upon occasion, was elected by the joint consent of his companions master of the feast. This he conceived a high honour, and, to express his sense of its great dignity and importance, he insisted upon providing and laying in every fresh stock, most assiduously inspecting, for that purpose, the stores of the liquor merchants and the first taverns in the city. But while he allowed no wine to be drunk by them but his own, he agreed that they should provide the eatables in equal shares Of these, the said Scheggia was the caterer, an office which he discharged to the admiration of all his friends, whose powers of deglutition did ample justice to the taste both of Scheggia and his friend. The latter they frequently crowned with vine and ivy, in imitation of the Bacchanalian god, while Zoroastro in his devotion declared that neither men nor gods had ever discovered the varieties of flavour like his friend Guasparri. All this was extremely agreeable to our hero, who began, for the first time in his life, to conceive himself of some importance, leading the toasts, as well as the conversation, to the most trifling and whimsical topics that could be imagined. The doctrine of witchcraft, incantations, and apparitions, and stories of dead people who had come to life again, were here discussed the whole night through, to the great edification of the host. But towards midnight Guasparri,

though he affected to ridicule the idea of supernatural appearances, began to feel extremely uncomfortable on hearing the awful particulars of each story, and in vain tried to laugh it off by saying that the dead found quite enough to do to get a living in their own world, without coming back again to trouble us in this. His sly companions, however, had the wit to see through the mask, and were infinitely amused at witnessing his exertions to shake off the fears which too evidently oppressed him. Pilucca's gardens continuing still the scene of their summer amusements, and Guasparri still superintending the wine, it happened that one of the relations of the latter, as if envious of the good fellowship he did not enjoy, began to blame his folly and extravagance in supplying the whole party with wine, while his pretended friends only flattered him to his face, to turn him into a subject of ridicule for all Florence when they left him, and that, in short, he would soon become quite notorious to the whole city for a simpleton as he was. Believing, as usual, everything that was told him, Guasparri resolved to withdraw from their company, and directly set off home, where he had left his wife and son and a single maid-servant to take care of themselves.

His old friends, waiting dinner for him a long while, began to wonder whither he could have withdrawn himself, and after in vain searching all the likely and all the unlikely places they could think of, they accidentally heard, just as their best wines were getting low, that he was actually gone to live with his family at the villa, a place where of all others they least thought of looking for him. They began to be seriously afraid that there was now an end to their usual course of festivity, but our hero in a short time becoming weary of the villa, resolved to return to town, where Pilucca one day accidentally met him walking along the streets of Florence. Joyfully hailing and shaking him by the hand, Pilucca welcomed him back, observing as he invited him for the same evening to a feast, "Heavens! how truly rejoiced I am to see you here once more! Where can you have been? I have not had the flavour of good wine in my mouth nor heard the stave of a good song since you left us." Guasparri, drawing back, replied that he was sorry he could not come; but on being questioned more narrowly, unable to give any excuse, and longing at the same time to be admitted to their company, he fairly confessed that there was no resisting such an offer—he would come, but that he could not pretend any longer to dictate to them what wines they ought to drink. Then relating the conversation he had had with his cousin, he declared he had come to the resolution of furnishing no more. His companion on hearing this affected to laugh outright, though he really felt little inclination when he considered the difference it would make were each of them to furnish his proportion, instead of laying the whole expense of the bottles upon their friend. At the same time he flattered himself he should soon be able to bring him round to his usual habits. When the party assembled in the evening, Pilucca communicated what had passed between him and Guasparri, to the great dismay of his companions, and they then held a regular council as to how they should proceed. They resolved to receive him with cheerful and happy looks,

and soon succeeded so well in flattering him into good-humour, that they obtained his company for several successive nights; but finding that they could never bring him to the same liberal way of thinking as formerly, they at length, after repeated trials, came to the resolution of fairly casting him off, declaring that he was no longer worthy of keeping company with gentlemen like themselves.

They deliberated, therefore, on the best method of getting rid of him by playing him some humorous trick, and fleecing him of his money at the same time in such a way as to give him no sort of inclination to return. Calculating upon the fears which they suspected he entertained for goblins, especially of such as haunted the churchyards, they proceeded to deliberate in what way they might turn them to good account. The ghostly council accordingly met; and aware that our hero when visiting certain friends had to return home in the evening over the bridge of Carraja in order to reach his own house, situated in Borgo Stella, and that no one slept in the same house, his family being at the villa, they forthwith commenced their operations. There was a certain Signor Meino, a manufacturer, and a great friend of Scheggia's, who resided next door to our hero, and great facility of communication existed between the houses. With some persuasion, Scheggia won over his friend to enter into their designs; and the day being arrived when they were to try the strength of Guasparri's vain boasting and resolution against spirits, they had everything prepared before evening for the execution of their plot. They were all supping together, and turning the conversation to the proper topic, they dwelt so long and fearfully upon the theory of apparitions, that our friend Guasparri's hair began to bristle up, and he reflected with dread upon the solitary walk he had before him ere he reached his beloved home. He would fain have requested one of them to accompany him at least as far as the bridge, had he not already committed his valour so deeply in the vain boastings he had so long been in the habit of indulging upon the subject At one time he came to the resolution of staying and sleeping where he was, but when he began to advance excuses for this purpose, Zoroastro, who saw into his design, completely foiled him by instantly proposing cards, at which our hero had already lost such immense sums, that he started as if he had really seen a ghost. Declaring that he must instantly keep an appointment, he set out, followed quietly at a distance by his wily companions, and took the road by Santa Maria Novella until he reached the fosse which led straight to the bridge of Carraja. Scheggia now quickened his pace, and running through the Borgo Ognissanti, arrived at the bridge before Guasparri by this shorter cut, and quickly marshalled his companions, he himself lying hid in the little Church of Santo Antonio, on the verge of the Arno, adjoining Santa Trinita

It happened to be a dark night in September, and agreeably to the orders of Zoroastro and Scheggia, their companions were stationed near the first pillars, each of whom held a long pike in his hand, to which were attached several large white sheets, with a cross upon the summit to resemble arms, and a huge mask of a most diabolical aspect. Two lanterns all on fire served for the eyes, while the mouth

grinned with a horrible smile, flaming with another lantern, which showed off the long sharp teeth to advantage. A long flat nose, sharp chin, and an immense slouched hat, completed the terrific figure, a sight of which would have been almost sufficient to put to flight the most doughty heroes of romance, not excepting the mad Orlando himself. Such was the ambuscade that lay glaring in secret, awaiting the arrival of the unfortunate Guasparri. They were all to rise up at the same moment, just as he passed these horrid apparitions, addressing each other by the name of Cuccobeoni, in order more effectually to alarm their hapless victim with their voices, who at length cautiously approached the bridge, using his utmost efforts at the same time to banish the idea of spectres from his mind. A low whistle from Scheggia was now the signal for the apparitions to appear, when they gradually rose from the earth, spreading larger and larger till they assumed their full terrific dimensions. Guasparri had just got half over the bridge; some of the apparitions stood before and some behind him; and his little strength and courage failing him together, he turned round each way, but had no power left to escape on either hand. The next moment the whole Arno seemed to teem with spectres, as tall, in our poor hero's opinion, as the church steeples, and exceeding the number, as he afterwards asserted, of thirty thousand demons, whose diabolical features now riveted him to the spot. "The Lord help me! the Lord help me!" he exclaimed in a doleful voice, but had no power to move. Soon observing that they were approaching as if to gather round him, and believing that he should be instantly devoured, he cried out in a still louder voice, "The Lord help me to pray! the Lord help me to run! I will run in the name of the Lord!" and away he wildly rushed through the midst of the apparitions, never once staying to breathe or to look behind him until he had arrived at the house of Pilucca, where he knocked with such violence as nearly to burst open the door. Here his friends were many of them assembled to welcome him back, having understood from their companions on the bridge that they might expect him in a short time, and that they must do all in their power to restore his suspended faculties. He threw himself upon a couch, unable for some time to recover breath; he could not utter a word, and he appeared on the point of swooning away when they applied the necessary restoratives.

The moment Guasparri had disappeared, Scheggia despatched his companions to Meino's house in order to secure the fruits of their adventure in the manner we shall soon recount; while he himself hastened to Pilucca's, where he found his friend Guasparri already so far recovered, as to be giving the most strange and unintelligible description of the wonderful and appalling scenes through which he had passed. His audience, by affecting to discredit the truth of the relation, threw him into the utmost rage, when Scheggia, walking quietly into the room from an inner chamber, as if he had remained there the whole of the evening, persuaded our hero to begin his story anew. Still he could not be persuaded, in spite of Guasparri's swearing that such was the fact, that the apparitions had literally appeared

to him; and the latter was thrown into the greatest despair when Scheggia, persisting in his unbelief, declared that he only meant to make fools of them all, and challenged Guasparri at the same time to accompany him to the bridge. Declining this offer, however, Guasparri contented himself with pointing out the exact situation in which the spirits attacked him, when both banks of the Arno were covered with their troops, clothed in white uniform, with faces of fire and heads as black as Erebus, all rushing on him at once to make him their prisoner. But when his friends pretended to return from a visit to the bridge without discovering any remains of the apparitions, they all with one consent began to upbraid him for his folly and cowardice, declaring that he must have drunk his senses away, and that he must be delirious to think of coming to interrupt them over their cards with such tales as these. They then sat down again quietly to play, while Guasparri was revolving in his mind how he could contrive to obtain the escort of the nightly watch as far as his own house. The moment he heard them passing, the moon having now risen, he sallied forth, and offered them a handsome reward if they would see him safe over the bridge. As they approached it, he seized the officer more closely by the arm, shutting his eyes to avoid the sight of the same distracting objects as he passed along.

On reaching his house, he felt some qualms of fear at the idea of sleeping there alone, his family residing at the villa, and he would gladly have gone farther to the house of one of his relations, had not the night been so very far advanced. It was his custom during that season to go to rest in a room upon the ground-floor, which Meino, his neighbour, had been prevailed upon by Scheggia to hang entirely with black drapery, borrowed from the Osso Company, adorned with emblems adapted to sacred occasions, such as death's-heads crosses, and remnants of mortality of every description Round the room were placed many large wax candles such as are used at burials, casting a fearful and glaring light, while in the midst of all was placed a bier covered with a carpet, on which lay the resemblance of a corpse, with orange flowers and rosemary strewed all round. A crucifix was fixed over the head, and two wax-lights at each side, for the convenience of those who might wish to contemplate the features more narrowly. Guasparri proceeded to take possession as usual of his own apartment, and as he opened the door beheld a scene which might have startled a stouter philosopher than himself. With his eyes fixed upon the whole apparatus of mortality he stood fascinated to the spot, and when he attempted to retreat he could proceed no farther than the door, where he fell, overpowered with horror, once more upon his knees, his head turned slightly back to ascertain whether the dead man were following to show him out But though he could not speak, he uttered an inward prayer, which at length endued him with so much strength as to enable him to rise up from his knees, and with another effort of despair he got through the door, and locking it eagerly after him to prevent pursuit, rushed out of the house. He then once more took to flight, with the intention of again seeking the residence of the very enemies who had thus cruelly invaded his repose. And as the

greater fear is always apt to remove the impression of a slighter, our hero in this his extremity no longer regarding the apparitions on the bridge which had lately inspired him with so much awe, pressed valiantly forward until he reached the very house he had not long since left. Here was a fresh scene of pleasure for his malicious companions, who for a long time permitted him to knock in vain. At length Pilucca made his appearance, exclaiming in an angry tone, "What! are you here again? Will you never leave off these mad tricks of yours? What do you mean by this conduct?" "Oh, help, help! have mercy on me, good gentlemen!" was our hero's reply. "My house is full of spirits; and I think all the demons in Tartarus must this night have broken loose. Oh, such a night!" and he immediately proceeded with a fresh account of his adventures. Such was the violence of his gesticulations and his perturbations, that his wicked friends at length consented, yielding to his vehement entreaties to accompany him home, where he vowed he would fully satisfy them in regard to the truth of his statements In the meantime, however, another party had been busily employed in removing the fearful preparations which had so much disturbed the equanimity of our hero's soul; and before he returned home with his fresh escort, the whole house had resumed its usual state, while the wary authors of the change had already taken refuge in the dwelling of Meino. "Why do you tremble so?" cried Zoroastro, as our poor friend laid his hand upon his own door, and then drew back. "Really, if you had not played us this trick once before to-night, we should almost be inclined to believe you; but you are not the man to impose upon us as you think." To this, Guasparri, bidding him enter before him, replied that he would forfeit his eyes if he had spoken a single word more than the truth, which they would find to their cost when they ventured in. "Neither your eyes nor your head will be of any use to us," returned Zoroastro; "but if you are serious, pledge us this diamond ring upon it, and two dozen bottles of your Monte Pulciano to encourage us. The truth is, we do not believe that you have seen anything either here or at the bridge; but pledge us the wine, and keep your head upon your own shoulders, and we will encounter the ghosts." To this the poor wretch consented; feeling assured that they would find a pretty warm reception from the visible and invisible spirits which swarmed about the room. So he put the diamond ring into their hands, worth at least thirty gold ducats, at the same time challenging each of the party to advance. Scheggia at first drew back as if afraid, saying: "Suppose your house should have been robbed in your absence. Do you go first," he continued, addressing Pilucca. "No, do you! do you!" cried each in their turn, which threw Guasparri into greater consternation than ever. "It is so very dark," added Monaco; "I dread going in the dark into a place where there may be thieves." "Well, here is a lantern," rejoined another; "take it, and forward in the name of Heaven." So Monaco pretended to be obliged to advance, and the others followed, Guasparri bringing up the rear with evident fears of the event. When he laid his hand on the door of the haunted chamber, Monaco paused; on which a thrill ran through our hero's frame, and his hair began to bristle up.

Seeing Zoroastro about to press forward, he held him back by the skirt of the coat, whispering, "It is not safe; let us go back," when suddenly opening the room door, and pushing him forwards, they burst into a loud laugh, declaring that the wager was won. Everything stood in its usual place, to the no small surprise and confusion of our hero, who cast his eyes in every direction in search of the demons, the sulphur tapers, the death's-head, and the dead man; but everything had disappeared. "Oh, thou villain, thou impostor!" they all cried out. "We never suspected, Guasparri, that you could have used us thus. One would have thought from your looks you were leading us into the infernal pit. Everything here is just as it was; it is really too bad; and yet you pretend to be shocked and surprised. We shall be compelled to decline your acquaintance: this is carrying matters quite too far."

It is impossible to do justice to our hero during this scene; he knew not whether he was really awake or in a dream: he raved and he rolled his eyes, but took not the least notice of what they said. To restore him a little to his wits, his friends began to entreat him, that as he had succeeded so well in his scheme of imposing upon them and rousing them from their beds, he would at least not think of carrying the affair further, and exposing them to the laughter of the whole city on the ensuing day. "We have secured the ring and the wine, however; that part of the joke is ours, so we are content: and if you please," continued Scheggia, observing that our hero remained far from easy in his mind, "if you please, I will stay with you here all night." Though he gratefully accepted his friend's offer, he never closed his eyes during that night, dwelling on the scenes which had so strongly impressed themselves upon his imagination. The next morning he rose early and set out to join his family at the villa, desirous of trying what a change of scene would effect in removing the unpleasant associations of the previous night. He had nearly, however, fallen a victim to this unfeeling and injudicious prank on the part of his old friends; for on the third day he was in so violent a fever that the physicians almost despaired of his life. They might be said to have flayed him alive, for during his convalescence he really cast away his old skin. Nor was it only in this respect that he underwent a change: he no longer left his family, and a blessed regeneration was the consequence of the frolic of his false friends.

On their side, the ensuing day was a day of triumph and festivity; they laughed and feasted at the expense of their unfortunate companion; but such triumphs and such follies usually end in bitterness and tears, the fate of their authors being still more pitiable than that of the victims they pursue. They even attempted to get the credulous Guasparri into their snares, and to betray him once more, in which they would most likely have succeeded, had it not been for the kind relation who interfered in his favour on a former occasion, and who now persuaded him to dispose of his house in town and to attach himself to rural pursuits.

NOVELLA IX.

I RECOLLECT that our friend Giovan-Francesco del Bianco frequently related a story—and he was every way qualified to tell a good story—of a certain Biancazio Malespini, a young Florentine, who happened, like most youths of his age, to be deeply enamoured of a beautiful girl, residing near the gate of San Niccolo at Ricorboli. She was the daughter of a gentleman whose property consisted in lime and brick kilns, the superintendence of which occupied so much of his attention as to leave the lovers a great deal of time to themselves. The father being often engaged at his works until very late in the night, the young Malespini on these occasions was accustomed to set out on the approach of twilight, passing eagerly through the little wicket near the gate of San Niccolo to avoid observation, and joining his fair young mistress about the same time that her father took his leave; the latter having no less confidence in the honour and integrity of his young friend than in the prudence of his daughter. On his return home the lover was accustomed to pass along the banks of the Arno, and proceeding through the great gate and along the walls of the mansion of justice, approached the gate of Santa Croce, where he again passed the little wicket and entered into Florence; and then dwelling upon the agreeable incidents of the day, he there sought repose.

Having in this way taken leave one evening of his beloved, and musing upon her perfections by moonlight as he followed the windings of the river, his reverie was somewhat disagreeably disturbed by a voice which seemed to proceed from the place of public execution, just opposite to him. *Ora pro eo! ora pro eo!* was repeated pretty audibly several times; and on turning his eyes towards the gallows, he beheld three or four figures apparently dancing in the air, and it being now the "witching hour of night," our lover testified no sort of pleasure at the view. He was quite at a loss to discover whether the forms were fanciful or real; when just as the moon went behind a cloud he again heard the *Ora pro eo.* While in some doubt how he should proceed, the light of the moon again broke from behind the clouds, and he imagined he saw another figure dancing upon the scaffold far above the rest. But our lover being possessed of great courage, and holding the theory of demons and apparitions in supreme contempt, on hearing for the third time the *Ora pro eo*, exclaimed in a tone of self-accusation, "What then! shall I be such a coward as to go away without ascertaining the meaning of this, and ever afterwards indulge doubt and fear upon the subject?" He had no sooner uttered this valiant speech, than he advanced boldly towards the gallows and began to mount the ladder. Now, unluckily for our hero, it so happened that about that time there was a poor maniac girl in Florence, who was in the habit of wandering towards evening beyond the confines of the city, and on this occasion she had directed her steps to this seat of final justice. It being now harvest-time, she had gathered several large pumpkins in the surrounding fields, and performed the office of executioner upon them, suspending them by the

heads, with the huge sprouts hanging down in the shape of legs; and having duly turned them off like an executioner, she left them thus quivering to the breeze. She had been amusing herself with observing their motions just as Malespini made his approach, and was preparing to turn off another of her pumpkins, when, suddenly stopping, she cried out in a horrid voice to our poor hero, who had ascended about half way up, "Stop, stop! and I will hang you too;" and the next moment, running down the ladder like a cat, our hero was seized with such a sudden fit of terror at the sight, that, believing it must at least be some demon in disguise, he relinquished his hold, and losing his presence of mind, fell down to the ground. The maniac was not long in descending after him, and desirous of adding him to the number of her victims, she endeavoured to lift him up with the intention of immediately hanging him by the neck. Finding him somewhat too heavy, she unlaced her apron-strings, and binding them round his throat, she dragged him in this manner towards the foot of the ladder, where fastening him very securely, she left him to his fate, pursuing fresh adventures wherever Fortune might choose to lead. Daylight at length appeared, when some peasants proceeding to the city perceived the strange exhibition which the whimsical lady had left behind her, and on approaching nearer they descried the gibbet adorned with flowers, and at its foot our poor hero tied by the neck and heels, and still in a deep swoon. Tidings of this affair having reached the city, numbers of people assembled, and the lover, to all appearance dead, was released from his very disagreeable situation. No one, however, could give any account of the strange apparition of the mock culprits which were observed swinging by their heads, nor was enabled to throw any light on the catastrophe of the unfortunate lover. His father and friends were in a short time upon the spot, and amidst tears and lamentations caused the body to be transported into the adjoining church, and placed in the cell of one of the priests, where an examination took place. The physician, finding some degree of warmth still lingering about the heart, declared there was a chance that he might still survive, and ordering a litter, caused him to be conveyed into one of the warmest apartments in his father's house. There, after making use of the strongest applications, and bathing the body in Malmsey wine and vinegar, to restore suspended animation, his friends had at length the pleasure of observing him gradually recover. But more than an hour elapsed before he could utter a word, and he then began to talk at random, and was unable to recollect where he was. His physician then bled him very copiously, which, though it restored him to his senses, left him in a lingering state for several weeks. The sudden alarm, however, had not only changed the colour of his hair and skin, but he actually lost them, nor did he ever afterwards assume the same appearance, or entirely recover from the effects of the mad lady's unceremonious attack His case gave rise to a good deal of disputation amongst the faculty and his own friends; for such was the wild and unsettled expression of his countenance, that many of the latter were at a loss to recognise him. The same appearance is known by physicians to occur in certain stages of various diseases, and they

attributed it entirely to the sudden impulse of fear when the maniac girl proposed, in so unexpected a manner, to cut short his thread of existence, and had so nearly executed her threat.

Yet the cause would have remained a mystery to this day, had not the same lady returned about sunset to take down the bodies she had suspended, when she was discovered in the act, and very properly put upon her trial in order to ascertain the real facts. Malespini, however, could scarcely be persuaded that he had not really seen something more than mortal, and that some horrid necromancer had not suspended those fearful forms by the neck for some diabolical purpose.

FIRST EVENING, NOVELLA V.[1]

NO sooner had the lovely Galatea brought her very pleasing and applauded little story to a conclusion, than Leandro, looking round upon us with a mild and joyous air, in his turn began :—Since it is my fate, fair ladies, and you, enamoured youths, to recount, under the feigned name you have given me (for, alas! he who once bore it breathed his spirit on the cold waves while struggling to reach the haven of his love), I must even, however unwillingly, persevere in rehearsing the sad mischances which have befallen such as believed themselves the happiest of lovers. Of this the following tale will afford but too grievous an example, filling your gentle hearts with dismay as we proceed, and from the eyes of beauty drawing unbidden tears. And what though the scene of sorrow belonged neither to Greece nor prouder Rome, neither to those of lofty lineage nor of royal stock? It was such as may serve to show that tragic terrors will sometimes lay desolate the humblest hearths, as well as strike the proud and golden palaces of kings. It may show, too, that a single woman, neither born a princess nor bred a queen, will suffice, when scorned, to bring down woful ruin upon herself and her whole family.

Listen to me, then, kindly, while I tell you that in the annals of Pisa is found the name of Guglielmo Grimaldi, who came to settle in Pisa from the confines of Genoa. He was then a youth of about two-and-twenty, with very few resources, and living in a hired apartment; yet, with saving habits and some ability, he was at length enabled to lend little sums of money upon usury. And in this way, by hoarding his gains while he spent little, he became in no very long time a rich man, without losing his desire of adding to his wealth. He lived alone, and, with the most unremitting diligence and secrecy, amassed and

[1] This very tragic story has long been a favourite subject of imitation, no less with the Italians than with the writers of other nations. Among the dramatic pieces, however, which appear to have been formed upon it, there is certainly no single production which can at all complete, in point of richness of poetry and dramatic pathos, with that presented to us by a distinguished writer of our own age and country. The "Fazio" of Professor Milman, though one of his earliest efforts, gave ample promise of his maturer powers. It would be fruitless to attempt here to point out the numerous improvements and ornaments which the English author has judiciously blended with his drama, and which confer upon his work the merit of an original composition.

concealed his increasing stores, until growing old at length, he found himself in possession of thousands, of which he would not have parted with a single crown to save the life of a friend or to redeem the whole world from eternal punishment. On this account he was detested by all his fellow-citizens, and paid dearly enough for it in the end. Having one evening supped out with some of his miserly acquaintance, he was returning late to his own house when he was assaulted by an unknown hand, and feeling himself wounded in the breast, he cried out and fled for help. Just at this moment came on a terrific storm of hail and wind and thunder, which increased his distress and compelled him to look out for shelter. Becoming faint from the loss of blood, he ran into the first house that he found open, belonging to one Fazio, a goldsmith, attracted by the blaze of a large fire at which he, the said Fazio, was making chemical experiments, having for some time past devoted the whole of his earnings to these pursuits, attempting to convert the dull metals of lead and tin into fine silver or gold. For this purpose had he now made so glorious an illumination that he was compelled to open the door to admit air while he melted down his metals, but hearing the sound of footsteps, he turned round, and beheld Guglielmo Grimaldi, the miser. "What are you doing here, friend," he inquired, "at such an hour and in such a night as this?" "Alas!" answered the miser, "I am ill; I have been attacked and wounded; I know not why nor by whom," and he had no sooner uttered these words, than he sat down and died upon the spot.

Fazio was greatly surprised and alarmed on beholding him fall dead at his feet, and opening his bosom to receive air, he tried to recall him to life, believing at first that the poor miser was dying of pure exhaustion and inanition by denying himself food. But on discovering the wound in his breast, and finding that his pulse no longer beat, he concluded that his visitor had really departed this life. Running to the door, he was about to alarm the neighbourhood, when hearing the terrific raging of the storm, he again drew back and sought refuge in his house. Now his wife Pippa and twin boys happened just at this time to be on a visit to his father-in-law, who was likewise about to take his leave of the world. Instead of calling a physician, then, he suddenly changed his measures and closed the door; examining next the body of the deceased, he found only four florins in his purse. Then, hid in a heap of old rags, he discovered a great bunch of keys, which from their appearance belonged to the house and chambers, the chests and strong boxes, of the miser, who, if report were true, had hoarded up immense wealth, especially in ready cash, secured in his own house.

The moment the idea flashed across Fazio's mind, being of a keen and penetrating genius, he determined to turn it to his own account, and to aim a bold stroke at fortune, whatever were the event. "Why not hasten," he said, "to his stronghold at once? I am sure to find it in his house, without a living creature near to say me nay. Why not transport it quietly, I say, into my own dwelling? I think no one will hinder me, such a night as it is, thundering as if the sky would fall! Besides, it is past midnight, and every living soul is either

sheltering or asleep. I am alone here, too, and the assassin of the poor miser must by this time, I think, have taken to flight, without stopping to see where he took refuge. So, if I can only keep my own counsel, who will ever suspect that Grimaldi the miser ran into my house thus grievously wounded and died? This is surely, then, an unlooked-for blessing; and were I to go about telling the real truth, who knows whether I should be believed? People might say I had robbed and murdered him, and I should infallibly be taken and put to the question; and how should I be able to clear myself? I dread to encounter the ministers of justice, for most probably I should never come alive out of their hands. What, therefore, will be the best? Why, Fortune is said to aid the bold; bold, then, will I be, and try to rescue myself at once from a lot of penury and pain." Saying these words, he thrust the keys into his bosom, and throwing a fur cloak over his shoulders, his face half buried in a huge slouched hat, he issued forth with a dark lantern in his hand, offering his bosom to the pelting of the pitiless storm with a secure and joyous air. Arriving at the miser's house, that stood at no great distance, he seized two of the largest keys, and soon made good his entrance; then advancing at once to the most secret chamber he could find, he gained admittance by double keys, and beheld a large chest, which after much difficulty he succeeded in opening. This contained others which were equally well secured, and which he had still more difficulty in unlocking; but what treasures opened upon his view when his task was completed! One contained all kinds of gold rings, chains, and jewels, with other ornaments, the most massy and valuable in their nature. In another were bags almost bursting with gold ducats, all regularly numbered and parcelled. Fazio, overpowered with joy, relinquished the bags filled with chains and jewels, saying, "As these may perhaps be recognised, I will stick to the solid gold." Having secured the last, then, under his arm, he departed with the keys in his belt towards his own house, without meeting a single person by the way; such were the pealing thunders and the flashes of terrific light which redoubled the terrors of the storm. Fazio, however, reached his house, and having secured the treasure, changed his dress; and being stout and active, he took the dead body of the miser in his arms, and bore it into his cellar. There he proceeded to make in the floor an excavation sufficiently large to contain his remains, into which, dressed exactly as he was, with the keys of all his treasures in his pocket, Fazio now thrust the body at least six feet below the earth, and covering it up, he fixed the whole firmly down with certain pieces of lime and tiles, in such a way that no one could perceive the place had been at all disturbed. Having thus disposed of the old miser, he proceeded very leisurely to count over the bags of money to which he had thus become the heir; and such was the sudden blaze of gold that opened on his eyes, that it was with difficulty he could support the sight. Each bag contained exactly three thousand ducats, as it had been marked, which he deposited in a large chest of drawers secured by a secret lock. His next care was to consume the trunk and bags in which he had brought the treasure in the great fire prepared for the transmutation of his metals; and to

these he added his crucibles, his bellows, and his base metals, having no further use for them; and having thus completed his labours, he went to rest.

By this time the storm had abated, and it was already daybreak; Fazio, therefore, continued to sleep and recruit his exhausted strength until near vespers. He then rose and went as far as the piazza and upon the Exchange, in order to learn whether there were any reports yet afloat in regard to the disappearance of the deceased, but he heard nothing either that day or the following. On the third day, however, the miser being no longer seen about his usual affairs, people began to make remarks, more especially when they saw his house shut up, suspecting some evil must have befallen him. Several of his friends with whom he had last been in company then made their appearance relating everything they knew; but no further intelligence could in any way be elicited. Upon this the court issued an order that his dwelling should be forcibly entered, where everything was found apparently as he had left it, to the surprise of the spectators, and the whole of his property was taken possession of in the name of the government. Books, writings, jewels, and furniture, everything was found as it ought to be, in such a way as to preclude the idea of any attempt at robbery. Advertisements, however, were immediately issued, offering high rewards for the production of his person, either dead or alive. All inquiries were in vain; and though the subject excited considerable noise and alarm, nothing whatever transpired. At the end of three months the government, being at war with Genoa, and no relatives advancing their claims, the whole of Grimaldi's goods were confiscated for the use of the state, but it was considered an extraordinary circumstance that there was no appearance of ready money.

Fazio in the meanwhile continued quiet and unmolested, rejoiced to perceive how well the affair went off, and leading a happy life with his wife and family, who were now returned to him. To them he did not venture to breathe a syllable of his good fortune; and had he fortunately persisted in this resolution he would have avoided the utter downfall and ruin of his family. For the affair had already begun to be forgotten, gradually dying away for ever, and Fazio had given out that he was about to take a journey into France for the purpose of disposing of several bars of silver which he had recently made; a report ridiculed by many who were aware that he had already thrown away his time, his labour, and money in forging the precious metals, while his friends strongly dissuaded him from leaving the place, observing that he might carry on his experiments at Pisa as well as at Paris But our goldsmith had adopted his plan very well knowing that he had plenty of good silver to dispose of; though, pretending that he had not money enough for his journey, he mortgaged a little farm for one hundred florins, half of which he took with him, and left the other half for his wife. He then took his passage in a vessel to Marseilles, deaf to all the tears and entreaties of his wife, who besought him not to throw away the last of their little substance, and abandon her and her little ones to penury and to

woe. "When," she said, "were we happier or better than when you pursued your own trade, bringing us daily enough for all our wants? Leave us not, then, to solitude and despair!" Fazio, tenderly soothing her, promised on his return to throw such a golden harvest into her lap as would console her for all past sufferings; but still in vain. "For," she continued, "if all this fine silver really exist, it will surely be as valuable here as in France; but I fear you want to desert us for ever; and when once these fifty ducats are spent, what will become of me, wretch that I am? Alas! must I go begging with these helpless little ones? Must I lose you, and be left to solitude and tears?" Her husband, who loved her most affectionately, unable to behold her affliction, determined to acquaint her with his good fortune, and kissing her tenderly, he took her one day after dinner into the chamber where he had concealed his newly acquired wealth, and related to her the particulars that had occurred. He then exhibited the whole of the riches he possessed, bags of ducats, silver and gold without end; and such was the astonishment and delight of his now happy wife, that she flung her arms in an ecstasy of pleasure round his neck, and weeping, begged forgiveness for all the complaints and reproaches she had used. Insisting upon her promise of secrecy, Fazio then acquainted her with his future plans, explaining how shortly he meant to return to her, and what a joyful and uninterrupted course of happiness would thenceforward be theirs. She no longer objected to his departure; but taking a tender farewell, bade him to think of her, and hasten as soon as possible his return.

The next morning, accordingly, having well secured the valuable metals he was taking along with him, double-locked and barred, and leaving a large portion of his treasures with his wife, he went on board, accompanied by the regrets and reproaches of all his friends, in which his wife, the better to conceal her feelings, affected to join. Indeed, the whole city united in ridiculing his enterprise, and some who had known him in his better days expressed their opinion that he ought to be taken care of, for that he was certainly inclined to run mad. Others said that they had long been aware what would be the consequence, and he would very soon share the fate of his mad predecessors in the accursed art of alchemy, that ruined instead of enriching its followers. In spite of all, however, Fazio set sail, and with prosperous breezes soon arrived at Marseilles, taking care by the way to throw the whole of his chemical apparatus into the sea, reserving only the more valuable articles he had obtained from the miser's house, with which he landed, and proceeded with the carriers as far as Lyons. In a few days after he emptied the contents of his money-bags, depositing a large sum at one of the first banks, for which he received letters of exchange on Pisa, some at the house of Lanfranchi, and others at that of Gualandi, after which he sat down to write to his wife, acquainting her that he had disposed of his silver, and intended shortly to return to Pisa. This letter the lady showed to her father, as well as to the rest of Fazio's friends and relations, some of whom expressed themselves much surprised, while others declared that he was a ruined man, the truth of which would speedily appear. Soon after, having

received his letters of credit, Fazio left Lyons for Marseilles, and thence taking ship for Leghorn, he had the pleasure in a short time of again beholding his wife and children. Embracing them again and again, he declared that he had succeeded beyond his utmost expectations, while the tidings quickly spread among his acquaintance that he had returned home rich with the products of his metals. He lost no time in presenting his letters of credit, on which he received nine thousand gold ducats, which were immediately sent to his house, exciting the joy and congratulations of all his relatives and friends.

Thus finding himself one of the richest men in his trade, and with the credit of having realised his fortune by his own ingenious experiments, Fazio began to think of living in a more splendid manner, and of sharing some of his happiness with his friends. In the first place, therefore, he bought an estate, and then a handsome house, besides making several other rich purchases; and investing his money in such advantageous concerns as offered, he soon assumed the manners and establishment of a prince. He added to the number of his domestics, and set up two equipages, the one for himself and the other for his lady; his sons were distinguished for the richness of their apparel; and he continued to live on the happiest terms with his wife, enjoying together the luxuries and pleasures which they had at command. Pippa, to whom such a life was wholly new, became somewhat vain of the change, and was in the habit of inviting her acquaintance to witness it, among whom was an old lady with her fair daughter, whom she invited to come and stay some time with her. Fazio, to whom she said that they would be of use to her in a variety of ways, was induced to give his consent, happy to perceive that they assisted his wife in the cares of her establishment, and that they all lived on the best terms together.

But Fortune, the constant enemy of any long-continued enjoyment and content, was preparing to change the colour of their fate and turn this summer sweetness and glory of their days into the chilling winter of sorrow and despair. For it was the cruel lot of Fazio to become enamoured of the young charms of the fair Maddelena, the daughter of their guest; and such was his continued and violent passion, that he at length succeeded, by the most consummate art, in leading her from the paths of innocence. Their intercourse continued for some time unknown to his poor wife, and he conferred on his unhappy victim the most lavish proofs of his regard. But as they became bolder with impunity, the unsuspicious Pippa could not at length fail to be aware of the truth, and displayed the indignation of her feelings on the subject in no very gentle terms. She reproached her fair guest with still more bitterness, and one day took occasion, in Fazio's absence, to drive her with the utmost fury and opprobrium from her house. Fazio, on returning home, was greatly incensed at these proceedings, and continued with the same infatuation to lavish the same favours upon the young Maddelena as before. On this account scenes of the most cruel and distressing nature were continually occurring between him and his wife; the demon of jealousy had taken possession of her bosom, and family peace and love were thenceforward banished alike from their

bed and board. It was in vain that Fazio now attempted to soothe or to subdue her irritated feelings She spurned his divided affection, and she met his threats with still more violent passion, treating them with merited indignation and contempt. In order to avoid these reproaches, her husband went to one of his villas at some distance, whither he invited his young mistress, and continued to lead the same abandoned course of life, while his wife remained plunged in the profoundest wretchedness and despair. These feelings, however, were soon absorbed in rage and jealousy, when she found after some months that her husband did not return, and was lavishing still greater proofs of tenderness and favour upon her rival. Thus dwelling with ceaseless anxiety and pain upon one hateful idea, the sense of her wrongs became too great to bear, and in a short time she came to the resolution of accusing her faithless and abandoned husband to the state, by revealing the transaction which had led to his sudden elevation and prosperity. And this appearing the only resource she had left to revenge her injuries upon the authors of them, without further warning or consultation she proceeded alone to consult a magistrate, who, holding an office similar to that of the Council of Eight in our own city, took down her deposition, comprehending everything she knew relative to the affairs of her husband. She, moreover, directed them to the exact spot where the remains of the miser had been buried in the cellar of their former house, and where the officers of justice accordingly found them. Then, still retaining her in custody, the magistrate despatched the captain of the band to the residence of her husband, where they found him enjoying himself in the society of his fair Maddelena. Immediately seizing him as a prisoner of the state, they conducted him back to Pisa, overwhelmed with the most abject despair; and when brought up for examination he refused to utter a syllable. But his wife being ordered to appear against him, he cried out with a loud voice, at the sight of her, "This is justice, indeed!" and then turning towards her, he added, "My too great affection for you has brought me to this;" and taking one of the magistrates aside, he freely revealed to him the truth of the affair, exactly as it had occurred With one accord, however, the whole Council refused to give credit to the story, asserting that there was every appearance of his having himself robbed and murdered the unfortunate Guglielmo, and threatening instantly to put him to the torture if he did not confess. This, upon his maintaining his own story, they proceeded to do, and by dint of repeated trials they at length compelled him to say what they pleased, and afterwards proceeded to sentence him to be broken alive upon the wheel, while the state appropriated the whole of his possessions The remains of the miser, Grimaldi, were then ordered to be removed and interred in sacred ground; the beautiful Maddelena and her mother were driven with ignominy from the villa to their former abode, and the establishment of Fazio was completely broken up; his wife, with her family and domestics, being compelled to take refuge wherever they could. On being released from court, where she had appeared as evidence against her own husband, the wretched Pippa returned home, but to a home desolate and deserted

by all but her children. In the agony of her grief, she wept, she raved, she tore her hair, too late perceiving, with feelings of remorse, the grievous error she had committed.

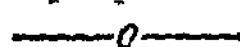
The tidings spread rapidly throughout all Pisa, and the people joined in expressing their astonishment, no less at the supposed enormity and deceit of which Fazio was accused, than at the strange treachery and ingratitude of his wife. Even her own relatives and friends, who assisted her, unanimously agreed in condemning her conduct, reproaching her bitterly for the degradation and ruin which she had brought upon her family, besides the inhumanity of having thus betrayed her husband to a painful and ignominious death. Having said this, they left her weeping bitterly and overpowered with intolerable remorse. On the ensuing day the wretched Fazio was led forth, and drawn through the streets of Pisa on a sledge, and after being thus exhibited to the people, he was conducted to the place of execution. There, having been first broken upon the wheel, he was executed in the presence of the people, and left on the same spot, by way of example, during the rest of the day.

The tidings of this terrific scene coming to the ears of his wife, whom he had continued cursing and reviling to his latest hour, in a fit of desperation she resolved to take vengeance upon herself. About dinner-time, then, there being few people to observe her, she seized her two little boys by the hand, and led them, weeping, towards the great square, the scene of the execution, while such as met her by the way only bestowed their maledictions on her, and allowed her to pass on. When she arrived at the foot of the platform where the body lay, few spectators being present, she proceeded, still weeping bitterly, to ascend the steps of the platform, with the children along with her, no one around offering the least resistance. There, affecting to lament over the wretched fate of her husband, she was sternly and severely upbraided by all who stood near, who said aloud, "See how she can weep now that it is done! It is her own work; she would have it so; and let her therefore despair!" The wretched wife then tearing her hair, and striking her lovely face and bosom with her clenched hands, while she pressed her burning lips to the cold features of her husband, next bade her little boys kneel down to kiss their father; at which sight the surrounding spectators, forgetting their anger, suddenly burst into tears. But their distracted mother, drawing a knife from her bosom, with remorseless fury hastily plunged it into the breasts of her sons, and before the people were prepared to wrest the deadly weapon from her hand, she had already turned it against herself, and fallen upon the lifeless bodies of her husband and her children. With a loud cry the people ran towards the fatal spot, where they found the dying mother and her two infants pouring out their last sighs as they lay weltering in their blood. Tidings of this tragic scene having spread rapidly throughout all Pisa, crowds of people came hastening from all sides, filled with lamentation and terror, to witness so heartrending a spectacle, where the yet warm and reeking bodies of the father, the mother, and the children were piled indiscriminately upon each other. And surely nothing we have heard of the woes of Thebes, of Syracuse, or

of Athens, of Troy, or of Rome, can be said to equal the domestic sorrow and calamity which Pisa thus witnessed in the lot of a single family, the whole of which was swept away in one day, the innocent victims of mistaken justice. The terror and surprise of the inhabitants of Pisa shortly spreading through other parts of Italy, caused so great a sensation in the different cities, that people left their houses to visit the fatal spot, lamenting over the bodies of the innocent children, lying with smiling countenances, as if buried in a profound slumber, on their parents' funeral bier. It was impossible for them to restrain their tears at the sight—a sight sufficient to soften a heart of stone, and at which Justice herself now dropped her fatal sword For she at length consented to grant to the prayers of Fazio's relatives that the bodies of the hapless children should be decently interred in the burial-ground of Santa Catarina, while those of the parents, who had died a desperate and unrepentant death, were to be placed without the sacred bounds, under the walls of the city. The procession was accompanied with the tears and lamentations of thousands, whose outcries against the cruelty and injustice of their fate, and whose expressions of pity for their sufferings, were loud and vehement.

Novels of Ortensio Lando.

ORTENSIO LANDO.[1]



THIS writer, who flourished about the middle of the sixteenth century, was by birth a Milanese, and traced his family origin to Piacenza. He devoted himself to the medical profession, in which he may probably have imbibed those heretical opinions which led to his subsequent banishment, many of the physicians of that period being distinguished for the freedom of their religious sentiments. It is said by some of the authorities that Lando was an Augustine friar, but the fact that he was persecuted for the heretical tendency of his opinions, militates against this assertion, which seems to be unsupported by any kind of evidence. It is certain that he abandoned his native country in dread of an impending martyrdom, and embraced the party of Luther on retiring into Germany, where he ended his days in poverty and distress. We may thus account for the various theological discussions which we find mingled with his writings, both in the Italian and Latin languages. His novels, to the number of fourteen, appeared with a collection of his "Varii Componimenti," at Venice, in 1552. According to the author's own statement, they were composed in imitation of the great Boccaccio, however far they may be from reaching the excellence of their model. He may nevertheless be allowed to take his rank among the best novelists of that day, who were as anxious to persuade their readers of their resemblance to Boccaccio as their predecessors had been to testify the truth and originality of their stories.[2]

Lando is considered remarkable for the easy and graceful flow of his language, in which he has scarcely any competitor. His narratives, likewise, in point of incident, are in general very lively and pleasing. Like Grazzini, whom he most resembled, he was of a very whimsical disposition, and is said to have been so strongly addicted to the sin of scandal, that, in default of other subjects, he was unable even to spare himself, having drawn so unfavourable a portrait of his own character as to leave his orthodox enemies very little to say against him. The thirteenth story of Lando, in the opinion of Mr. Dunlop, possesses intrinsic excellence, and forms one of the following selection.

[1] Varii Componimenti di M. Ortensio Lando: Venice, 1552, 8vo.
[2] History of Fiction, vol. ii. p. 441.

NOVELLA IV.

MANFRED, King of Navarre, was one of the most cruel and sanguinary princes of his age. Altogether unworthy of the name of king, there was nothing sacred in his eyes, nothing that seemed to restrain him in his ferocious career. He was never known to evince marks of pleasure, except where rapine and violation attended upon his steps. This unnatural disposition he more particularly indulged towards those who had most essentially served him, until, unable longer to endure the extreme severity of his yoke, his own nobles rose up in arms and excited the people to revolt. The signal being once given, they rushed forward in crowds towards the palace, in order to satiate their vengeance upon the spot. Incapable of making head against the wrath of his exasperated people, the sense of his past crimes suddenly smote upon the soul of the monarch, and he stood for a moment the image of anguish and despair; but the tidings of fate bursting louder and louder on his ear, he recollected a secret staircase which led to the back of his palace, and snatching up the young prince, his son, by Queen Altilia, a daughter of the King of Spain, he attempted to escape from the palace, already enveloped in flames. His hair, his royal mantle, and even his features, were scorched with the excessive heat, but the child, whom he had carefully wrapped in a flannel gown, escaped unhurt. In this state he succeeded, in a quarter where the assailants were but few, in making his way beyond the precincts of the palace, and at length, after infinite risks, he passed the frontiers of his own dominions. With slow and painful footsteps he then proceeded, begging alms by the way, from country to country, having exchanged his royal garments for a pauper's dress, and wishing yet afraid to die. His exasperated subjects meeting neither with him nor his son, whose name was Vitrio, concluded that they had both perished in the flames, and immediately proceeded to elevate to the throne his brother Aldobrandino, a wise and temperate prince, who proved himself worthy of their choice.

Manfred, in the meanwhile, continued to traverse various regions with his little boy, who sometimes walked at his side, and sometimes was borne in his father's arms, encountering unnumbered perils and deprivations, and stung with remorse at the recollection of his past enormities. Drooping at length under the weight of years and infirmities, he arrived at Sienna, where he applied for admission into the public hospital, and was charitably received. Finding himself here approaching the termination of his days, while his poor son, Vitrio, stood weeping by his side, he entreated the governor and some other gentlemen of the city to visit him before he expired. Several persons having complied with this request, King Manfred, turning towards the boy with tears in his eyes, addressed him as follows:—"Behold, my child, the well-merited punishment of cruelty and sin! Behold me, a lone and banished man, perishing of want, as you have frequently witnessed during our long and painful pilgrimage. It is my wish before I leave you to reveal the history of our birth and name, for

you are nobly born, and some time you may perhaps profit by a knowledge of the truth My name is Manfred, the tyrant of Navarre, and you are the offspring of my queen, Altilia, daughter of King Severus of Spain. I saved you, at imminent risk, from the flames kindled by an indignant people in order to envelope us in the ruins of our own palace. Believing us to have perished in the flames, my brother was elevated to the vacant throne, and I became a wretched exile, suffering under the incessant attacks of remorse, poverty, and despair. But I have to beseech you, my son, that you will obey me in what I am about to request,—that you will ever bear in mind those precepts of your ancestors which I myself so unhappily violated or neglected, and thus avoid the horror of being surrounded by the threatening arms of an injured and exasperated people. Imprint, then, the four following maxims upon your memory. In the first place, never abandon the old path for the new, secondly, never attach yourself to a woman whom you may not lawfully call your own, thirdly, marry no woman till you have first seen her, and found her nobility of birth to be worthy of sharing your high rank; fourthly, never strike your enemy until you have first thrice drawn your sword and thrice sheathed it in the scabbard." Then, having taken a tender leave of his son, and, fully sensible of his late crimes, received the sacrament and reconciled himself to our holy Church, he turned himself upon his side and expired. During this scene the surrounding spectators were bathed in tears, but their grief was lost in the deeper lamentations of the unhappy youth, who wept over his father as the first and the last friend he ever had in the world. "Whither shall I go? Where shall I seek a refuge now?" he cried. "My dear, dear father, thou hast left me without hope or stay!" But some gentlemen of Sienna, tearing him almost forcibly from the body, caused the deceased to be honourably interred at the public expense; nor could his son have received more ample proofs of regard had he been the immediate successor to a throne. For the noblest Siennese families invited him to their houses, and in a short time they selected a deputation of gentlemen to accompany him into the kingdom of his grandfather, and to bear witness to the decease of Manfred and the manner in which he had eluded the vigilance of his people. He was welcomed by King Severus with the utmost kindness, the Siennese ambassadors receiving also public testimony of his approbation of their conduct in a variety of rich donations to grace their return.

Pleased with the young prince's conduct and disposition, the king brought him up at his own court, and when he had reached his sixteenth year, he bestowed upon him the hand of one of the most beautiful princesses of Portugal, celebrating his espousals with the bright Cillenia in the most pompous and magnificent manner. Not very long after this Vitrio was seized with a violent fever, and in order to facilitate his recovery he made a pious vow to visit as a pilgrim the holy cities of Rome and Jerusalem. On his convalescence, therefore, he entreated the king to permit him to fulfil his vow, which he doubted not had restored him so far to health. This, with some difficulty, being at length granted by the king, who tenderly loved him, the invalid set

out, loaded with rich presents and attended by a noble train. Having visited Rome and made the due offerings at the holy shrine, he departed for Ancona, where he hired a noble galley to convey him to the port of Baruti, situated not very far from Jerusalem. He was borne by prosperous breezes until he arrived near the isle of Cyprus, when a sudden tempest arising, the vessel was driven off the coast of Syria, and being dashed to pieces on the rocks, about twenty of the passengers were saved and captured by the neighbouring inhabitants. But Vitrio, with several of his companions, had first escaped to shore, and continued his flight during the whole of that day along the coast, without any nutriment, until they were overpowered by fatigue. The following morning, meeting with some wild berries, they recruited their exhausted strength, and were fortunate enough after long toil to reach a spring of water near the shore, but so dark and turbid as to be extremely nauseous to the taste. Vitrio then threw himself, overwhelmed with sorrow and weariness, upon the sands, desirous of obtaining some repose. On seeing this, two of his attendants began to lament their unhappy fate, and, reproaching him with want of feeling in having paid no attention to them, they resolved to consult their own safety, and to abandon him as he lay. Awakening soon after, he arose and called them by their names, and, when those who remained faithful to him came forward, he besought them not to desert him; for he had dreamed that while he slept his companions had departed. Under the impression that they had all conspired to betray him, he now besought them most tenderly as friends and brothers that they would neither be ungenerous enough to injure him nor to abandon him to his fate. Thus addressing them, with tears in his eyes, he resumed his way; and about the middle of the day it so happened that he again fell in with the two cavaliers who had agreed to leave him. Weary with travelling along the shore, where nothing was found to satisfy the cravings of hunger and thirst, Vitrio determined to strike into the interior of the country. They soon afterwards arrived at a spot where two pathways met; one of which appeared new and spacious, the other untravelled and overgrown with briars and thorns. Vitrio, here recollecting the advice given him by his father, never to abandon the old path to walk in the new, came to the resolution of persevering in the thorny way. Upon observing this, the two cavaliers who had ...fore abandoned him began to reproach him with his folly in perse...ing in a road which would certainly lead his companions into destru...on. But Vitrio, deigning not to reply, pursued the path which h...ad chosen, followed by Lambrone and Gelso only, two of his atten...ts who still remained faithful to him. The sun had scarcely gon... down before the latter travellers reached a large town called Rama... short distance from Zaffo, a place to which a great number of ...ristians used to resort. Gelso, who understood the language o... country, there procured provisions for their support, and the fol... day they arrived at Zaffo; while the two cavaliers who had t... the great road, attended by the rest of the crew, were all ... and cut off by banditti, with the exception of a single mariner ... you... ...ght tidings of their fate to Zaffo. In a few days

they again resumed their journey, and had the good fortune to reach Jerusalem, where, after religiously observing their vows, they bent their way towards the sea-shore, and passing into Cyprus, the prince there fell sick, and was confined to his couch for the space of a year. When he recovered, his two faithful friends, Gelso and Lambrone, likewise fell sick, and died soon after. Vitrio shed many tears over their graves, and it was long before he again recovered sufficient fortitude to resume his way whithersoever his destiny might lead. But tears availed him nothing, and, having exhausted his other resources, he betook himself to a few jewels, which he disposed of to the best advantage, and proceeded slowly towards Nicozia. He there remained some time in the court of King Troilus, who, pleased with his gentle manners, no less than with the story of his adventures, granted him a refuge from the assaults of Fortune. But even here, alas! she did not long cease to persecute him; for a daughter of Theodoro, lord of Arzuffo, becoming deeply enamoured of him, soon gave him to understand by secret messages that she had bestowed upon him her whole heart, and loved him more than herself. Again recollecting his father's instructions, not to attach himself to any woman but his lawful wife, Vitrio received her overtures with the utmost coldness, and at length began to avoid her presence in order to show his decided aversion to her suit. The consequences of this proceeding were soon felt by Vitrio, for the lady, indignant at his rejection of her advances, changed her love into the fiercest anger and disdain. In order to ensure a safe revenge, she gave orders to her nurse to deposit a case of jewellery under the young prince's couch; and the wicked old woman having obeyed her, the prince was immediately accused by the offended lady of having committed the theft. After enduring solitary confinement for the space of two years, he was sentenced to terminate his days upon the gallows. Now, it was an ancient custom of the island that every criminal condemned to death had the power of redeeming himself by the payment of two thousand bezants. But this unhappy youth had already expended all his resources in feeing the judges, the advocates, and the courtiers, in order to obtain the exercise of their influence in a final appeal to the monarch. In fact, he was now completely destitute, and there was nothing left for him but to summon fortitude to die. His eyes were already bound, and he was fast approaching the scene of execution, when a beautiful maiden who had lately succeeded to a large inheritance observed him passing along, buried in the profoundest affliction. Taking compassion on his fate, and impelled by a tenderer feeling, she instantly offered the amount of the fine, and claimed at the same time the young man's deliverance, if he would consent to accept her as his spouse. It is impossible now to describe the mental struggles of the unfortunate youth, and we may justly estimate the magnanimity of his soul in hesitating as to a proposal of marriage, although the preservation of his life depended upon his acceptance of it. Even now he debated within himself whether to perish or to violate the commands of his holy religion by taking two wives. In this emergency he recollected the injunction of his father not to marry until he had seen the lady and

ascertained her nobility of birth; and he therefore requested to see the maiden and to be informed as to her extraction. The bandage was removed from his eyes, and the officer, pointing out the lady, observed, "Behold the fair daughter of the merchant Palliodoro." On hearing these words, Vitrio, turning to the officers of justice, bade them lead on, for that he was content to suffer. "The crown of Navarre," he exclaimed, "must never sit upon the head of a merchant's daughter, however exalted a soul she may possess. Heaven, I trust, will grant her a better husband than I shall ever make her; and as for me, if it be well that I should escape, God will yet provide the means." Hearing these expressions, and beholding the firm and noble deportment of the prisoner, the chief officer despatched a messenger to the king, saying that the youthful stranger had refused the price of his redemption and the hand of the rich daughter of Palliodoro. The king then ordered Vitrio to be brought before him, and obtained from him a full confession of his previous history, of his long wanderings and sufferings after having fled with his father, and begged their bread in foreign lands. "Compassionate, then," continued Vitrio, "most noble prince, my strange and unhappy fortunes. Permit me not to suffer until my accusers have been again examined: you will find that I am innocent, and that I do not deserve to die. Your majesty will not, therefore, deny me that justice which I have not yet received." The two women being then brought into the presence of the king, and threatened with torture if they did not forthwith reveal the whole truth, immediately confessed the falsehood of the charge, and were condemned to perpetual imprisonment.

The monarch then commanded a noble vessel to be fitted out in order to convey the stranger to the shores of Spain. Returning his grateful thanks, Vitrio departed, and soon after landed in the territories of King Severus, and proceeded towards his court, reflecting on the results of his obedience to his dear father's precepts. It was just on the point of nightfall as he reached the outskirts of the royal palace, where, giving his name to the astonished officers, who had long numbered him with the dead, he proceeded up the staircase and along the spacious galleries alone. The first object which he beheld on approaching the scene of his former pleasures and power was a lady, caressing an infant in her arms, the same lady whom he had left so young, his own cherished and honoured bride. His first impulse was a feeling of jealousy, and, believing that she was caressing an adulterous offspring, he was on the point of unsheathing his sword and sacrificing them both to his revenge. But the memory of his father once more rushed into his mind. "Never," he exclaimed within himself, "strike your foe until you have thrice drawn your sword from its scabbard;" and he stood and gazed fearfully some moments at the lady and the child. The latter, startled at the glittering blade, ran screaming towards its mother, who sat with her face turned partly aside from her husband's view, crying out that a man was coming to kill him. "Sleep, sleep, little foolish one," replied his mother: "no man since my dear husband left me has ever passed this sad chamber-door." Catching the sound of these words, Vitrio, breathing a prayer

of gratitude to his father's spirit, quickly sheathed his sword, and hearing his child repeating the name of mother, he rushed forward, and the next moment found them both clasped within his arms. His voice and features were still so familiar to the fancy of the princess that she knew him in a moment, and a sudden flood of joyous tears at once expressed and relieved the deep emotions of her breast. The tidings quickly spreading abroad, the prince was immediately introduced into the presence of the king, who received him as if he had recovered his own son. A general festival was in consequence proclaimed throughout the kingdom, and jousts and tournaments were celebrated. The King of Portugal, his father-in-law, demonstrated no less satisfaction at his return, which he evinced by the pomp and magnificence of his entertainments. In after years, Prince Vitrio succeeded to the throne of his grandfather, to which, before his decease, he added the sceptre of his uncle and of his wife's father, thus reigning over three several countries. He was blessed with a numerous progeny, and as he had always approved himself a fond and obedient son, he had the delight of embracing only wise and affectionate children.

NOVELLA V.

THERE was once a gentleman of Verona, named Messer Ugo da Santa Sofia, who devoted himself with such assiduity to the study of the arts and sciences, and especially to the contemplation of the heavenly bodies, that he had become famous throughout the whole country. Whether planets, or fixed or wandering stars, fiery comets, satellites, or lunar orbs, he boasted the most intimate acquaintance with all their motions, and foretold their revolutions in heaven without the risk which he incurred when he ventured to prophecy respecting those which should happen on earth. He foretold the death of King Robert and the succession of a female to the throne. The confines of Hungary, he predicted, were to extend even as far as Greece, and would afterwards reach the plain of Troy; and he smelt the approach of that horrid pestilence which committed such dreadful devastations in the memorable year 1348. But suffice it to observe that the accuracy of his predictions was such, that his reputation spread through Europe, and none of its princes ever found themselves in difficulty without sending for Messer Ugo to enjoy the advantage of his sage admonitions. We must not be surprised, therefore, to hear that he became a little vain of these his unearthly powers, which, in his own opinion, were altogether infallible. Now it so fell out that one day during harvest-time he went to his country house, for he took great pleasure in seeing the corn threshed in the barn, when one of his neighbours, an ancient villager, very well off in the world, called upon him to communicate what he considered to be rather important information at that season of the year. Being somewhat lame in one of his legs he was in the habit of riding a beautiful ass, from which he

now alighted at the door of Messer Ugo. "I have called upon you, as I was riding by, just to tell you, Messer Ugo, that I think it would be prudent in you to take care of your corn, which has been cut so long, during this threatening weather; for within an hour hence we shall have such a tremendous storm, that you will imagine the very heavens are about to tumble upon our heads." Our philosopher, with great coolness, inquired how his neighbour alone came to be in possession of this secret, and after gazing round the horizon on all sides, unable to detect the least black spot, which frequently portends the distant storm, he turned a look of quiet contempt upon the good countryman, observing, "The sky is quite clear, the sun mild, and not even a cloud upon the mountains, and yet you are bold enough to prognosticate a storm. Why, there is a soft south wind blowing, and the sun is in the right sign and the right degree; nothing less than a miracle can make it rain. Nature herself could not make it rain now. With the help of Providence, to be sure, she might; but, as she stands disposed at present, it is impossible we can have any rain." He continued to debate the point with the countryman for a long while without making the least impression upon him; the only answer he received was, that Messer Ugo would be much better employed in giving orders to have his grain quickly housed than in wasting arguments upon him, as the approaching tempest would not merely destroy the corn, but beat down trees, scatter herds and flocks, and shake the houses to their foundations. Messer Ugo's choler now rose to such a height at the countryman's strange pertinacity, that he was much inclined to bestow upon him a box on the ear; but instead of this, he so far controlled his indignation as first to consult his telescope and compasses, with which he once more examined the heavens more narrowly than before, yet still drawing the same conclusion, that rain for that day, at least, was quite out of the question, expecting as soon to see the mountains levelled with the plains or the rivers flowing over the hills. Finding that he could be of no use, the villager at length took his leave, and he had scarcely dismounted at home before a dark speck became visible in the horizon, and swelling with the rising wind, in a short time obscured the face of the sun itself. Strong lightnings soon afterwards began to play towards the north, while the wind changing gradually into the east, floods of rain, resembling water-spouts rather than a common shower, emptied themselves into the bosom of the west, already torn by the rising conflict of the elements. As the torrents of rain increased, the reverberating thunders and the livid lights, instead of dying away, seemed to gather double strength in an almost unheard-of manner, such as we may suppose pealed over the heads of the fierce Titans when, rising in rash revolt, they experienced the indignation of their father Jove. Towers and steeples tottered to their base, the loftiest oaks lay prostrate, the river Adige rose and burst its old embankments, while the proudest palaces with their royal inmates trembled, as if anticipating the dissolution of the groaning fabric of the world. But where was poor Messer Ugo with his famous astrological observations during this time, and where was all his unhoarded grain? It was an equally severe

blow upon his property and his pride; he almost wished he had never become versed in a knowledge of the stars, since he found himself thus shamefully imposed upon by the weather. His fine corn was flying all abroad, a prey to the fierce elements, and he sorely repented him of having turned a deaf ear to his neighbour, whose precaution would have so well availed him. Away he flung his square and compasses, his astrolabe, and his whole apparatus, in the rage of the moment, while he watched the wild progress of the storm, every moment appearing an age until it should have so far subsided as to permit him to creep with safety to his honest neighbour, to entreat his pardon and to inquire by what art he had foretold this dreadful tempest in the midst of a perfect calm At length, with some difficulty, during a pause of the awful blast, he contrived to reach his door; and after apologising to him in a meek and faltering tone, he besought him to explain in what way he could possibly have foreseen such a calamity. "There is certainly," he continued, "some superior master in the same art as my own, whom you must have applied to on this occasion" "That is very true, Messer Ugo," replied the villager; "I have consulted him, and he is no other than the pretty animal upon which you saw me mounted. My own ass unfolded the secret to me, as he has done many others of the same nature before. He can tell fair weather, too, as well as foul; and I never in my life was in need of any other weather-glass: he takes a more exact survey of the heavens than the best glass or compass could possibly do. I always remark that when the weather is going to be extremely rough, he sets up his back, his hairs stand on end, and he hides his tail between his legs, shaking as if he were in an ague But if we are merely going to have a moderate breeze, it is quite another thing, for then he only holds his tail between his legs for a few moments, lashing his sides; and if no thunder and lightning follow, he will scarcely do so much But when we are to be visited with such a fierce tempest as we have had to-day, then you should mind what he says; he never in all his life gave me such an awful warning before. For he first directed all his ears and eyes as it were up into the sky; he stopped and listened; and then he leaped up, and beat the earth with his four feet as if all the horse-flies in the world had been devouring him. So I thought I would just step and tell you our opinion upon the subject, for my noble beast and I are always perfectly of one accord on this point. Nor should you, with all your vast stores of learning, Messer Ugo, be surprised at this; for how is it that the cock informs us so exactly of the hour, as if he had got a little piece of watch-work in his head? How is it in the least more strange than what we hear of the dolphins gambolling before the luckless vessels, with their curved backs upon the surface, warning the poor sailors of the tempest at hand? Why should not my ass be supposed to know something likewise upon the subject?"

Messer Ugo da Santa Sofia had not a word to utter in reply; he had now fairly the worst of the argument, and at length candidly confessed his admiration of the superior tact and foresight of the ass, grieving, however, at the same time, that the long-eared steed of Cara-

botto (the name of the good villager) should be, after all, a greater astrologer than himself, who had actually grown grey in the service of the stars, the tides, and the causes of everything which happens here below. He entreated his good neighbour to keep the matter secret, at least for a while, lest his reputation should suffer in the opinion of the world. The countryman very kindly promised that he would do so, but whether he really did or not is uncertain, as the affair quickly took wind, though most probably from some witnesses who must have been present at the controversy previous to the storm Certain it is that the whole country was speedily in possession of the secret, and of much amusement in consequence, it being everywhere said that the ass of Carabotto had turned out at last a greater astrologer than the great Messer Ugo da Santa Sofia di Verona himself. The saying became at length quite proverbial, and nothing was more common than to hear a man answer a very pertinacious enemy by observing, "Yes, I daresay you think you know more astrology than Carabotto's ass," which generally brought another reply much as follows "Go, go! for you know less than poor Messer Ugo da Santa Sofia himself."

When our unhappy astronomer learned that the matter was publicly divulged throughout all Lombardy, he went into such a violent fit of passion, that he actually seized and committed to the flames more than two thousand crowns' worth of astrological books and instruments; quadrants, spheres, and nativities all fell a prey to the fiery element, and he used even to walk with his eyes fixed upon the ground to avoid contemplating the heavens, which, after all his long labours, had so egregiously deceived him.

NOVELLA VI.

It was said of Messer Leandro de' Traversari, canon of Ravenna, that from the opening to the close of his mortal career, he invariably evinced the most decided enmity to truth. He had such a total disregard for this invaluable quality, that if he ever happened to stumble upon the truth, he betrayed as much melancholy and regret as if he had actually sinned against the Holy Ghost. Besides, he was not merely the most notorious assertor of "the thing which is not" himself, but the cause of falsehood in others, compelling his very friends and dependants to confirm his wicked statements, under penalty of incurring his most severe spiritual displeasure.

There was a certain Florentine who had lately entered into his service, and who, perceiving his master's peculiarity in this respect, resolved not merely to humour him in it, but to add something further on his own part, in order the better to recommend himself to his notice He one day availed himself of an opportunity, when walking with the good canon in the gardens of the archbishop near the city, to give his master a specimen of his inventive powers. Observing the gardener employed in planting cauliflowers, the prelate happened to remark,

"These cauliflowers grow to a surprising size; their bulk is quite prodigious. I believe no one can bring them to such rare perfection as my gardener." As the latter did not care to contradict this testimony so favourable to his character, Messer Leandro subjoined to the observation of his superior, "Yes, my lord; but if you had ever seen those that grow in Cucagna, you would not think these so very extraordinary in point of size" "Why, how large may they grow?" inquired the archbishop. "How large?" returned Messer Leandro, "I can scarcely give your lordship an idea of it. In those parts I hear it is no uncommon thing for twenty knights on horseback to take shelter together under their huge cabbage leaves." The archbishop expressing no slight astonishment at these words, the wily Florentine stepped forward to his master's relief, saying, "Your Excellency will not be so much surprised when I inform your Excellency that I have myself seen these magnificent cabbages growing in that strange country, and I have seen the immense cauldrons in which they are boiled, of such a vast construction, that twenty workmen are engaged in framing them at once; and it is said that the sound of their hammers cannot be heard from opposite sides, as they sit in the huge vessel to complete their work." The noble prelate, whose intellect was not of the highest order, opened his eyes still wider upon the Florentine, exclaiming that he fancied such a capacious saucepan would contain sufficient food, were it rightly calculated, for the whole people of Cairo at one meal.

While they were thus engaged, a person made his approach with an ape upon his shoulders, intended as a present for the venerable archbishop, who, turning towards the canon, with a smiling countenance, noticed the very singular resemblance between the human figure and that of the sagacious animal before them. "It is my serious opinion," continued he, "that if the beast had only a little more intellect there would not be so much difference between him and ourselves as some people imagine" "I trust," replied the worthy canon, "your lordship would not mean to insinuate that monkeys really want sense, for if so, I can soon, I think, convince your lordship of the contrary by a story pretty apposite to the purpose.

"The noble lord Almerico was one day feasting the good bishop of Vicenza, having given orders to his cook to prepare all the varieties and delicacies of the season. Now the cook was in possession of an excellent method of guarding the treasures of his kitchen, for which purpose he kept an invaluable ape, excellently tutored to the business. No man, not even the boldest, ventured to steal the least thing in his presence, until a certain footman from Savignano, more greedy than a horse-leech, and unable to check his thieving propensities, hit upon what he considered a safe means of eluding the monkey's observation. He began to cultivate his acquaintance by performing all kinds of amusing tricks and bribing him to be in good-humour. The moment he perceived the ape busily engaged in imitating what he saw, the rogue, binding a handkerchief over his own eyes, in a short time handed it likewise to the mimic, and with secret pleasure beheld him fastening it over his face; during which time he contrived to lay his hands upon

to increase my wages, in consideration of so abominable a business." "Well, then, listen to me," replied his master; "when it is my intention to come out with some grand and extraordinary falsehood, I will take care to tell you the evening before, and at the same time I will always give you such a gratuity as shall make it worth your while. And if I should happen to tell a good story after dinner, as you stand behind my chair, and you swear to having seen it, very innocently, you may depend upon it you shall be no loser." This his servant agreed to do upon condition that he would observe some bounds, and keep up some show, at least, of reason and probability; which the honest canon said so far as he was able he would try to do; adding that if they were not reasonable lies the servant should not be bound by the contract, and might return the gift.

Thus the most wonderful adventures continued to be related at the good canon's table, and what is more extraordinary, they were all very dexterously confirmed. So going on very amicably together, the canon one evening intending to impose a monstrous lie upon one of his friends, took down a pair of old breeches, and presented them to his servant as the requisite gift. In the morning, attending his master to church as usual, he heard him after service relating a story to one of the holy brotherhood, who stood swallowing it all with a very serious face, how in the island of Pastinaca the magpies are accustomed to get married in proper form and ceremony, and how, after laying, and sitting upon their eggs for the space of a month, they bring forth little men, not larger than ants, but astonishingly bold and clever. The Florentine upon this could no longer restrain his feelings, crying out before the whole company, "No, no, I cannot swear to this neither; so you may take back your breeches, master, and get somebody else in my place."

NOVELLA XIII.

RICCARDO CAPPONI, a noble Florentine, having devoted himself in early life to trade, in the course of time realised a very handsome property. When advanced in years, he took his son, Vincenti, into partnership, and not long after gave up his whole mercantile concern into his hands; and falling into a bad state of health, owing either to his great exertions or to his subsequent high living, he became unable to leave the house.

His son, Vincenti, who was of an extremely avaricious disposition, finding his father continued to linger much beyond the period his covetous and ungrateful heart would have assigned him, and unwilling longer to support him, took measures, under pretence of obtaining for him better medical advice than he could at home provide, to have him conveyed to the city hospital. Yet his affairs were then in a flourishing state, and everything that he possessed he owed to his unhappy parent, whose age and infirmities, whose tears and entreaties, he alike disregarded. This unnatural son could not, however, contrive to

Giovan-Francesco Straparola.

GIOVAN-FRANCESCO STRAPAROLA.

THIS author was born at Caravaggio, and is ranked among the Venetian writers, having chiefly resided and composed his works at Venice. He is to be esteemed rather a useful than a very happy and amusing novelist, inasmuch as he furnished a large collection of stories for the benefit of his successors, many of which are considered curious in illustrating the progress of fiction; "chiefly," says Mr. Dunlop, "as being the source of those fairy tales which were so prevalent in France in the commencement of the eighteenth century."

The first portion of his "Piacevoli Notti"[1] was published in the year 1550 at Venice, and the second part at the same place in 1554. Four more editions afterwards appeared, comprehending the entire work, amounting in the whole to seventy-four tales. In the introduction we are told that a princess and her father, having fallen from their high estate, became attached to a party of private persons, who for their amusement during the summer evenings relate stories which are continued through the cool and pleasant hours of an Italian night. In a letter addressed "Alle Piacevoli Donne," dated the 11th of January 1554, and prefixed to his novels, he informs them that he presents the stories just as he heard them repeated from the lips of some fair friends. He trusts, therefore, that they will not find fault with the simple and familiar style in which they are written, being copied by him just as he found them, and not being of his own composition. He is certainly correct in disclaiming the merit of originality, since many of his tales are borrowed from Apuleius, some from the "Novelle Antiche," and others from Giovanni Brevio, such as the story of the nuptials of Belphagor, which forms the fourth tale of the second night. Straparola was indisputably a better collector than an author. He has, however, the merit of having supplied Molière with his "Ecole des Femmes;" and, indeed, with several other plots for his inimitable comedies. Together with Boccaccio, he may be considered the great storehouse from which the French dramatists have drawn their subjects, while they affected to despise the authors of them.

Besides this novel, Straparola produced a work entitled "Opera Nuova," consisting of sonnets and other poems, published at Venice in 1515, though he is not ranked among the Italian poets of Crescimbeni. It is observed by Mr. Dunlop,[2] that he levied his heaviest contributions upon the eighty novels of Jerome Morlini, a work written in Latin

[1] Tredici Piacevoli Notti. Venice, 1554. [2] History of Fiction, vol. ii. p. 446.

and printed at Naples in 1520, 4to, but now almost utterly unknown, from which thirteen are literally translated into the Italian, and many of the rest closely imitated.

TENTH NIGHT, NOVELLA IV.

IN Como, a little city of Lombardy not very far from Milan, there once dwelt a citizen of the name of Andrigetto da Sabbia, whose immense possessions, surpassing those of any other individual, did not, however, prevent him from adding to them by every means in his power. Being perfectly secure against the attacks of conscience in all his dealings, he was never known to suffer remorse for the most unjustifiable actions He was in the habit of disposing of the produce of his large estates to the poorer citizens and peasantry, instead of selling it to merchants and others who could command ready money, not from any charitable motives, but in order to obtain possession of their little remaining property, still uniting field after field to the great possessions he had already acquired. It happened that so great a scarcity began to prevail in the city and its vicinity, that many persons actually perished of want, while numbers had recourse to our old usurer for assistance, to whom, from the urgent pressure of circumstances, they were compelled to make over, in return for the necessaries of life, such interest as they might possess either in houses or lands The concourse of people in his neighbourhood was so great as almost to resemble a jubilee or a public fair Now there was a certain notary, Tonisto Raspante by name, a most notorious and wily practitioner of his art, and more successful than any other of his brethren in emptying the pockets of the poor villagers. He had still, however, so much regard for an ancient law in Como relating to usurious contracts, which required the money lent to be counted in the presence of proper witnesses, as to refuse to draw up such instruments as Andrigetto often directed him to prepare, observing that they were altogether against the form of the statute, and he would not venture to risk the penalty. But such were the overbearing manners of the old miser, and so great was his authority in the city, that sometimes threatening him with ruin, and at other times bribing him to his purpose, he compelled the attorney to obey his commands. The time for confessing himself being at hand, before presenting himself at the confessional, Andrigetto took care to send to the priest an excellent dinner, with as much of the finest cloth as would make a pair of hose for himself and his servant, announcing at the same time his intention to confess on the ensuing day, when he thought that he was sure of meeting with a favourable hearing. The priest undertook with pleasure the task of absolving from his sins so eminent and rich a citizen, and received his penitent with the utmost cordiality. Andrigetto fell on his knees before his spiritual father, accusing himself with very little ceremony of various sins and errors, not forgetting his usurious and illegal contracts, all which he recounted in the most

minute manner. The priest, who had sense enough to perceive the enormous nature of his offences, conceiving himself bound to make some representations on the subject, ventured certain gentle hints on the impropriety of their repetition, and in the meanwhile strongly recommending restitution to the injured parties. Instead of taking this in good part, Andrigetto turned very sharply round upon his confessor, observing that he was at a loss to understand what he meant, and that he had better go, and return no more until he had learned how to confess persons in a more rational manner. The priest owing his preferment in a great measure to Andrigetto, and fearful lest he might lose his favour altogether, began to retract as well as he could, gave him absolution, and then imposing as slight a penance as possible, received a florin for his reward, after which Andrigetto took his leave in very excellent spirits.

Not long after this interview, our old usurer, while rejoicing in this absolution from all his sins, fell ill of a mortal distemper, and the physicians shortly despaired of his life. His friends and relatives having gathered round his bed, took the liberty of suggesting that it was now time to think of a sincere confession, to receive his last spiritual consolation, and make a final arrangement of his affairs, like a good Catholic and a Christian. But the old gentleman, who had hitherto devoted all his thoughts and exertions, both day and night, to the hoarding of his wealth, instead of being at all impressed by the awfulness of his situation, only replied with great levity to their arguments, still amusing himself with arranging the most trifling concerns, and evincing not the least uneasiness at his approaching end. After long entreaties and persuasions, he was at last prevailed upon to comply with their request, and agreed to summon to his assistance his old agent, Tonisto Raspante the notary, and Father Neofito, his confessor.

On the arrival of these personages, they addressed the patient with a cheerful countenance, telling him to keep up his spirits, for that with God's help he would soon be a sound man again. Andrigetto only replied that he feared he was too far gone for that, and that he had perhaps better lose no time in first settling his worldly affairs and then arranging his ghostly concerns with his confessor. But the good priest, exhorting and comforting him to the best of his ability, advised him first of all to place his sole trust in the Lord, humbly submitting himself to His will, as the safest means of obtaining a restoration to health. To this, however, Andrigetto replied only by ordering seven respectable men to be called in as witnesses of his nuncupative last will and testament These individuals having been successively presented to the patient, and taken their seats, he proceeded to inquire from his friend Tonisto the very lowest charge which he was in the habit of making for penning a will. "According to the strict rules of the profession," replied Tonisto, "it is only a florin; but in general the amount is decided by the feelings of the testator." "Well, well, then," cried the patient, "take two florins, and set down what I tell you." The notary having invoked the divine name, drew out the preliminaries in the usual manner, bequeathing

the body of the testator to the earth and his soul to the hands of God who gave it, with humble thanks for the many favours vouchsafed by Him to His unworthy creature. This exordium being read to Andrigetto, he flew into a violent rage, and commanded the notary to write down nothing but his own words, which he dictated as follows: "I, Andrigetto di Valsabbia, being of sound mind, though infirm of body, do hereby declare this to be my last will and testament: I give and bequeath my soul into the hands of the great Satan, the prince of devils." Hearing these words, the witnesses stood aghast; Raspante's quill started from the paper, and, in evident horror and perturbation, he stopped. Looking the testator very earnestly in the face, he interposed: "Ah! Messer Andrigetto these are the words of a madman!" "How!" exclaimed Andrigetto, in a violent passion, "what do you mean? How dare you stop? Write word for word as I direct you, and nothing more, or you shall never be paid for a will of mine: proceed, I tell you!" Struck with the greatest horror and surprise, his friends attempted to remonstrate with him, lamenting that he should make use of language so opposite to his usual good sense, language which only madmen or blasphemers could be capable of using on such a subject and in so awful a situation as his. "Desist, then," they continued, "for Heaven's sake, and consult your honour and the safety of your poor soul. Think of the scandal such a proceeding would bring upon your family, if you, who were esteemed so prudent and so wise, were to make yourself an example of all that is perfidious, ungrateful, and impious towards Heaven."

But Andrigetto paid no further attention to their reproaches than by observing that his business was with his attorney, and that as he had not yet finished his will, they had better take care what they were about; on which there was soon a respectful silence throughout the room. He then turned towards his attorney, requesting to know, in a voice of suppressed passion, whether he was prepared to go on, as he had already offered to pay double the usual charge for his labours. Apprehensive that Andrigetto might expire before he had made a disposition of his property, the notary promised to do as he was required, more especially when he heard the patient beginning to hiccup with the violence of his emotions; so that he was compelled to make a solemn vow to fulfil his client's instructions.

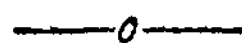
"Item," continued Andrigetto, "I hereby bequeath the wretched soul of my wicked agent, Tonisto Raspante, to the great Satan, in order that it may keep company with mine when it leaves this world, as it shortly must." "The Lord have mercy on me!" cried the poor attorney, shocked at the deep solemnity with which these last words were uttered; "the Lord have mercy on my soul!" and the pen dropped from his hand. "Recall," he continued, "my honoured patron, recall those wicked words; do anything but destroy my eternal interests, my last, my dearest hopes." "Go on, you rogue!" cried the testator, "and do not venture to interrupt me again; do not tell me about your soul. You have your pay, and that is enough, so proceed quickly as I shall direct you. I leave my said attorney's soul to the devil, for this reason, that if he had not consented to draw up

so many false and usurious contracts, but had driven me from his presence as soon as I proposed them, I should not now find myself reduced to the sad extremity of leaving both our souls to the king of hell, owing entirely to his shameful cupidity and want of common honesty." The attorney, though trembling at the name of the king of hell, yet fearful lest his patron might enter into further particulars far from creditable to him, wrote as he was commanded.

"Item," continued the patient, "I bequeath the soul of Father Neofito, my confessor, into the claws of Lucifer; aye, to thirty thousand pair of devils." "Stop, Messer Andrigetto, pray stop," cried the priest; "and do not think of applying those dreadful words to me. You ought to put your trust in the Lord, in the Lord Jesus, whose mercies always abound, who came to save sinners, and is still inviting them, night and day, to repentance He died for our sins, and for your sins, Messer Andrigetto; you have only to beseech pardon, and all will yet be well. The road is still open to restitution; hasten to make restitution, then; for the Lord does not wish the death of a sinner. You have great wealth; remember the Church; you will have masses said for your soul, and may yet sit in the seats of paradise." "Oh, thou wicked and most wretched priest!" retorted the patient, "by thy vile avarice and simony thou hast helped thine own soul, as well as mine, into the pit of perdition. And dost thou now think of advising me to repent? Confusion on thy villainy! Write, notary, that I bequeath his soul to the very centre of the place of torments, for had it not been for his bold and shameless conduct in absolving me from my numerous and repeated offences, I should not now find myself in the strange predicament in which I am placed. What! does the rogue think it would be now just to restore my evil-gotten gains, and thus leave my poor family destitute? No, no; I am not quite such a fool as to do that; so please to go on. Item, To my dear lady Felicia I leave my pretty farm, situated in the district of Comacchio, in order to supply herself with the elegancies of life, and occasionally treat her lovers as she has been hitherto in the habit of doing, thus preparing the way further to oblige me with her company in the other world, sharing with us the torments of eternity. The remainder of my property, as well personal as real, with all future interest and proceeds accruing thereon, I leave to my two legitimate and beloved sons, Commodo and Torquato, on condition that they give nothing for a single mass to be said for the soul of the deceased, but that they feast, swear, game, and fight, to the best of their ability, in order that they may the sooner waste their substance so wickedly-acquired, until, driven to despair, they may as speedily as possible hang themselves. And this I declare to be my last will and testament, as witness all present, not forgetting my attorney." Having signed this instrument and put his seal to it, Andrigetto turned away his face, and uttering a terrific howl, finally surrendered his impenitent soul to Pluto.

Novels of Matteo Bandello.

MATTEO BANDELLO.



ONE of the most favourite novelists of Italy belonging to the sixteenth century, and the most esteemed, with the single exception of Boccaccio, in other countries, next claims our attention. Matteo Bandello was born at Castelnuovo, in the district of Tortona, though his chief residence was at Milan He is there supposed to have produced the greatest part of his novels, until, alarmed at the frequent revolutionary commotions which agitated that city, then a prey to internal discord and foreign violence, he sought refuge in the French territories, not far from Agen, in company with his friend Cesare Fregoso. Here, in the castle of Bassen, he devoted himself with ardour to the restoration and revision of various productions which had been either mutilated or destroyed by the incendiaries who had set fire to his house in Milan. It was with difficulty that, through the medium of some of his friends, he rescued a portion of his novels from the hands of the ruffians, who in ransacking his house found little other spoil than the fruits of his literary labours. On losing his friend Fregoso, the companion of his retreat, who perished by assassination, he in the year 1541 accepted the offer of Francis I. of the bishopric of Agen, to which he was accordingly appointed, and which he retained until the period of his death, which happened subsequently to the year 1555 It is said, but without sufficient foundation, that his life was protracted to the year 1561. His novels first appeared at Lucca in 1554, in quarto They consist of four parts; the first, second, and third parts containing fifty-nine stories, and the fourth, twenty-eight. so that Bandello is to be considered as ranking at the same time among the best and the most voluminous of the Italian novelists. The work is dedicated to Ippolita Sforza, consort of Alessandro Bentivoglio, for whose amusement it is said to have been first undertaken, but she died before it was completed. The stories are, for the most part, rather drawn from historical incidents than from the invention of the writer He addresses them severally to some distinguished individual, independent of the general dedication, and he is always anxious to acquaint his reader with the event which gave rise to them, and to induce him to believe that they are less imaginary than true. In general, he asserts that they are derived from stories which he heard related in company, and which he reports as exactly as he can, with the conversation which led to them In regard to his style, if he does not deserve to be placed amongst the best writers, he is yet beyond mediocrity. He has been blamed, not without reason, for the inelegance and carelessness of his

diction, and he may be considered as inferior in this respect to many less celebrated novelists of his day The same negligence is also perceptible in the narration of his incidents; as an excuse for which, it has been observed by Echard with an amusing simplicity, that we ought to recollect that he only undertook to transcribe his stories as he heard them repeated from the lips of others! The author, however, modestly disclaims all title to elegance of language, observing that being a native of Lombardy, he was quite ignorant of the beauties of the Tuscan style. His novels have been translated into almost every tongue.

PART I. NOVELLA LVII.[1]

It is really superfluous, my noble friends and patrons, to use so many kind entreaties, when a single word from you would be enough, by way of command, to induce me, as you seem to wish, to give you some account of my most remarkable adventures, in addition to what you have already heard of my travels in Africa. With the manners and customs of the people, as well as with their peculiar religious opinions, I believe you are now pretty well acquainted, insomuch that I no longer need to dwell upon these. You are aware that I have been a traveller from the time I was a boy of fifteen, when I set out from my native city of Genoa, in company with Messer Niccolo Cattanio, whose extensive mercantile connections induced him to visit various parts of Barbary. With him I first arrived at the city of Orano, situated on the shores of the Mediterranean, and belonging to the kingdom of the same name. Numbers of the Genoese were accustomed to resort thither, and there is a large place of traffic named from that circumstance the Lodge of the Genoese. My friend Cattanio was highly respected there, and even in great credit with the king, so much so as to have obtained various privileges from him, in consideration of the able and beneficial manner in which he promoted the commerce of his subjects Residing there during several years, I acquired an excellent knowledge of the language, manners, and peculiar practices of the people, when I was at length prevailed upon to join a party of Oranese merchants, to whom I had been recommended, through Cattanio's influence, by their king. They were men of approved worth and of the kindest manners, and with them I prepared to make a commercial tour through the country, visiting various regions of Africa, in which we discovered many great and populous cities In several of these countries we met with seminaries of instruction, with their regular professors of different sciences, paid and appointed by the people. There are, moreover, different hospitals instituted for the relief of the impoverished and distressed, who are there supplied with a regular subsistence, it being a principle of their

[1] We are told by Mr Dunlop that the incident of the monarch losing his way in the chase is also related in the "Fabliaux," as well as in many of the old English ballads, and probably had its origin in some adventure of the Caliph Haroun Alraschid The tale of Bandello is the origin of "Le Roi et le Fermier" of M. Sedaine —*History of Fiction*, vol iii. p 461.

religion to bestow alms, as pleasing in the sight of God. And I solemnly aver that I have met with more instances of true charity and kindness from what are termed these uncivilised people than I ever had the good fortune to do among those who are called Christians. Among other splendid places, I visited a noble city, built in the age of King Mansor, who had likewise been supreme pontifex or high priest of Morocco. Some of their national chronicles were here exhibited to me, composed in the Arabic character, which bore ample witness to the diligence with which they record the most remarkable public events. Being very well versed in the language, I amused myself with perusing various portions of them, but more particularly those relating to the times of King Mansor. I thence learned that among other amusements he was immoderately fond of the chase; and it one day so happened, that being on a hunting excursion, he was surprised by a terrific storm, which, with irresistible fury laying waste both corn and woodlands, soon dispersed his courtiers on all sides in search of shelter. Mistaking his way in the confusion which ensued, King Mansor, separated at length from his companions, wandered through the forests until nightfall, and such was the tempestuous raging of the winds, that, almost despairing of finding shelter, he checked his steed, doubtful which way he should venture to proceed. From the terrific darkness of the sky, relieved only by sheets of flashing light shooting across the far horizon, he was fearful of going farther, lest he should incur still greater danger, either by riding into pitfalls or the deep marshes bordering the forest grounds. As he thus stood, listening to the distant thunder and the raving of the storm, he stretched his view in vain to discover some signs of human existence; until, on proceeding a few more steps, a light suddenly appeared at only a short distance from him. It was from the window of a poor fisherman's hut, who earned his livelihood by catching eels in the adjacent pools and marshes. On hearing the voice of the king, who rushed forward with a shout of joy on beholding a human habitation, the fisherman hastened to the assistance of the bewildered traveller, whom he believed to have lost his way in the storm. Inquiring who called, King Mansor approached near, and entreated him, if he possessed the least charity, to direct him the shortest path to the residence of the monarch. "The king's court," replied the poor man, "is distant from this place above ten long miles." "Yet I will make it worth your trouble, friend, to guide me thither; consent to oblige me, and you shall have no reason to complain," said the king. "Though you were King Mansor himself," returned the fisherman, "who entreated as much, I would not venture upon it at this hour of the night, and such a night as this is; for I should render myself guilty, perhaps, of leading our honoured monarch into destruction. The night is dark, and the waters are out around us." "But why should you, friend, be so very solicitous about the safety of the king?" "Oh," replied the good man, "because I honour him more than I do any one else, and love him more than myself." "But what good has he ever done you," asked the king, "that you should hold him in such high esteem? Methinks you would be rather more comfortably lodged and clothed were you any extraordi-

nary favourite of his." "Not so," answered the fisherman; "for tell me, Sir Knight, what greater favour can I receive from my honoured king, in my humble sphere, than to be protected in the enjoyment of my house and goods, and the little earnings which I make? All I have I owe to his kindness, to the wisdom and justice with which he rules over his subjects, preserving us in peace or protecting us in war from the inroads of the Arabs, as well as all other enemies. Even I, a poor fisherman, with a wife and little family, am not forgotten, and enjoy my poverty in peace. He permits me to fish for eels wherever I please, and take them afterwards to the best market I can find, in order to provide for my little ones. At any hour, night or day, I go out or I come in just as I like, to or fro, in my humble dwelling; and there is not a single person in all these neighbouring woods and valleys who has ever dared to do me wrong. To whom am I in-debted for all this, but to him for whom I daily offer up my prayers to God and our holy prophet to watch over his preservation? But why do I talk, when I see you, Sir Knight, before me, dripping from the pelting of this pitiless storm? Deign to come within, and receive what shelter my poor cabin will afford; to-morrow I will conduct you to the king, or wherever else you please."

Mansor now freely availed himself of the invitation, and dismount-ing from his horse, sought refuge from the still raging storm. The poor steed likewise shared the accommodation prepared in a little outhouse for the good man's ass, partaking of the corn and hay. Seated by the side of a good fire, the king was employed in drying himself and recruiting his exhausted strength, while the wife was busily cooking the eels for his royal supper. When they were served, having a decided distaste for fish, he somewhat anxiously inquired whether there was no kind of meat for which he might exchange them. The fisherman very honestly declared that it was true he had a she-goat with a kid; and perceiving that his guest was no unworthy personage, he directly offered to serve it up to table; which having done, he presented the king with those parts generally esteemed the best and the most delicious. After supper, the monarch, retiring to his rustic couch, reposed his wearied limbs and slumbered until the sun was up.

At the appointed hour he once more mounted his steed, attended by his kind host, who now took upon himself the office of a guide. They had scarcely proceeded beyond the confines of the marshes, when they encountered several of the king's party, calling aloud in the utmost anxiety and searching for their royal master in every direction. Un-bounded was the joy and congratulation of the courtiers on thus meet-ing with him safe and uninjured. The king then turning round to the poor fisherman, informed him that he was the monarch whom he had so much praised, and whom he had so humanely and honourably received the foregoing evening, and that he might rely upon him that his singular courtesy and good-will should not go unrewarded.

Now, there were certain hunting-lodges which the king had erected in those parts for the convenience which they afforded in his excur-sions, and several of his nobles had likewise adorned the surrounding country with various seats and other dwellings, so as to give a pleasing

relief to the prospect. With the view of bestowing a handsome remuneration upon the good fisherman, the grateful monarch gave orders that the pools and marshes adjacent to these dwellings should be drained. He then circumscribed the limits of a noble city, comprehending the palaces and houses already erected, and after conferring upon it various rich immunities, by which it shortly became both very populous and powerful, he named the place Cesar Elcabir, or the Great Palace, and presented it as a token of his gratitude to the honest fisherman.

At the period when his sons succeeded to it, no city throughout the king's dominions was to be compared with it in point of splendour and beauty of appearance. During the time I remained there it was filled with merchants and artisans of every description. The mosques were extremely grand, nor were the colleges and hospitals less worthy of admiration. As they have but few good wells, the cisterns and other public conduits are very large and numerous. The inhabitants of the places I visited are in general liberal and kind-hearted men, of simple manners, and neat and plain in their dress and appearance. The gardens are at once spacious and beautiful, abounding in all kinds of fruits, which supply a weekly market, the emporium of all the surrounding country. It is situated not above eighteen miles distant from Azella, now called Arzilla, in the possession of the Portuguese.

Now, simple as the whole of this story may appear, it will at least be found to inculcate one beautiful moral; it teaches us to behave with courtesy towards every one, courtesy being like virtue its own reward, and sure of meeting sooner or later, as in the instance of the poor fisherman, that reward here below.

PART III. NOVELLA X.

In the castle of Moncaliero, not far from the city of Turin, there dwelt a widow lady of the name of Zilia Duca, whose consort died before she had attained her twenty-fourth year. Though extremely beautiful, her manners were somewhat abrupt, resembling rather those of a pretty rustic than of a polished city dame. She devoted herself to the education and future welfare of an only son, between three and four years old, and relinquished all idea of again entering into the marriage state. Entertaining somewhat narrow and avaricious views, she kept as small an establishment as she could, and performed many menial offices usually left to the management of domestics. She rarely received or returned visits; stealing out on the appointed fasts early in the morning to attend mass at an adjoining church, and returning home in the same private manner. Now it was a general custom with the ladies in that part of the world, whenever strangers happened to arrive at their residence, to grant them a salute by way of welcome to their roof. But the lady of whom we speak proved for once an exception to this general and hospitable rule. For Messer Filiberto da Virle, a gentleman and a soldier of distinguished prowess and esteem, stopping at Moncaliero, on his way to Virle, chanced also to attend

mass at the same church where Madonna Zilia was to be seen. Charmed with her graceful and attractive air, no less than with the beauty of her countenance, he eagerly inquired who she was; and though little pleased with the avaricious character which he heard attributed to her, he tried in vain to efface the impression she had made. He pursued, however, his journey to Virle, where, after transacting his affairs, he resolved to retrace his steps to Moncaliero, not very far distant, and take up his residence there for some time. With this view he took a house not far from the castle, availing himself of every opportunity of throwing himself in the lady's way, and resolved at all risks, and whatever might be the labour, to induce her to relinquish the unsociable conduct of which she was accused.

After feasting his eyes long and vainly in her sight, he at length contrived to obtain the pleasure of an introduction; but she had scarcely spoken two words to him, when she excused herself, and retreated, as usual, home. In truth she had been short with him, and he felt it in such a way that he made a strong resolution, which he almost as suddenly broke, of renouncing all thoughts of her for ever. He next enlisted some of her own sex among her most intimate acquaintance to employ their influence with her to vanquish her obduracy, in order that, after having carried the outworks, he might take the castle of Moncaliero by storm. But the enemy was on the alert, and all his efforts proved abortive. He looked, he sighed, he wrote, he went to mass, he walked before and behind the castle, in the woods, by the river-side, where he threatened to drown himself; but the lady's heart was more impregnable than a rock, harder than everything except his own fate; for she deigned neither to smile upon nor to write to him. What should the wretched lover do? He had already lost his appetite, his complexion, and his rest, besides his heart, and really felt very unwell. Though physicians were not the persons to prescribe for such a case, they were nevertheless called in, and made him a great deal worse; for he was now rapidly advancing towards that bourne from which neither lovers nor travellers return; and without other help, it became very evident that the poor young gentleman would soon give up the ghost.

While his life hung suspended in this languishing state, one of his friends and fellow-officers, a happy fellow from Spoleto, hearing of his condition, came posting to his succour, determined at least to be in time for his funeral, and see that all due military honours were paid to his loving spirit. When he arrived, Messer Filiberto had just strength enough to tell the story of his love and the cruel disdain of the lady, intending afterwards, as he assured his friend, to think no more about it, but quietly to expire. His friend, however, having really a regard for him, and believing he would grow wiser as he grew older, strongly dissuaded him from the latter alternative, observing that he ought to think about it; that it was a point of honour on which he ought to pique himself to bring it, like a good comedy, to a happy conclusion. "My poor Filiberto," he continued, "leave the affair to me, and be assured you shall speak to her as much as you please." "That is all I wish," exclaimed the patient with a little more animation, while a slight colour suffused his cheek; "persuade her only to listen to me,

and, trust me, I can manage the rest myself But it is all a deception. What can you do, when I have wasted all kinds of love-messages, gifts, oaths, and promises in vain?" "Do you get well; that is all you have to do," returned our Spoletino, "and leave the rest to me." He spoke with so much confidence that the patient in a short time grew wonderfully better; and when the physician a few days afterwards stepped in, he gave himself infinite credit for the improvement which had taken place. Now the reader must know that the wits of Spoleto are renowned all over Italy; they are the most loose-tongued rattlers, the most diligent petitioners for alms in the name of St Antony; the most audacious and sleight-of-hand gentry in the world. They have a very excellent gift of talking and making something out of nothing; and no less of persuading people to be of their own opinion, almost against their will. Nearly the whole of that amusing generation who are in the habit of getting through the world by easing the rich and the simple of their superfluous cash, who dance upon two poles, dole out the grace of St. Paul, charm the dancing serpents, or sing wicked songs in the public streets, will be found to trace their birth to Spoleto.

Messer Filiberto's friend was well qualified, therefore, as a relation of these itinerant wits, to assist a brother in distress, especially in such a dilemma as that in which our hero found himself. Considering him, at length, sufficiently convalescent, our Spoletino fixed upon a sort of travelling pedlar to forward the designs he had formed for the relief of the unhappy lover. Bribing him to exchange dresses, he took possession for a period of his collection of wares, consisting of every article most tempting to a woman's eyes, either for ornament or for use. Thus armed, he set out in the direction of Donna Zilia's residence, announcing himself as the old travelling merchant with a fresh supply of the choicest goods. These tidings reaching the ears of the lady, she sent to desire him to call at her house, which he directly entered with the utmost familiarity, as if by no means for the first time, and addressed her in the most courteous language he could command. Then opening his treasures, she entered upon a review of the whole assortment, displacing and undervaluing everything, while she purchased nothing. At length, fixing her eyes upon some beautiful veils and ribbons, of which she fancied she was in want, she inquired how much he expected for such very ordinary articles. "If you will sell them, good man, for what they are really worth, I will take no less than five-and-thirty yards; but if you ask too much, I will not look at them, I will not have a single ell." "My lady," replied the false merchant, "do my veils indeed please you? They are at your service, and say nothing as to the price; it is already paid. And not only these, but the whole of this excellent assortment is your own, if you will but deign to receive it" "No, no, not so," cried the lady, "that would not be right. I thank you, good man; though I certainly should like to have them at as low a rate as I can. So ask what you please, and I will give what I please, and then we shall understand one another: you gain your livelihood in this way, and surely it would be cruel, however much I might wish it, to take them for nothing. So deal fairly with me, and I will give you what I think the goods are really worth." "But, your ladyship, please you,"

replied the wary merchant, "I shall consider it no loss, but a favour, if you will condescend to receive them under no conditions at all. And I am sure if you possess as courteous a mind as your face betokens, you will accept these trifles presented to you on the part of one who would gladly lay down not only his whole property, but his life at your feet." At these words, the lady, "blushing celestial rosy red," eyed the merchant keenly for a moment, "I am astonished to hear you talk thus, and I insist upon knowing who you really are There is some mystery in all this, and I am rather inclined to think you must have mistaken the person to whom you speak." The merchant, however, not in the least abashed, being a native of Spoleto, acquainted her in the mildest and most flattering terms with the long and passionate attachment entertained for her by poor Messer Filiberto, and the delicacy with which he had concealed it until the very last. Handsome, accomplished, rich, and powerful, he was prepared to lay all his extensive seigniories at her feet, and account himself the most fortunate of mankind. In short, he pleaded so eloquently, and played his part so well, that she at length, after a pretty long resistance, consented to see his friend. He then hastened back to Messer Filiberto, who overwhelmed him with the most rapturous thanks, and lost no time in preparing to pay a visit to his beloved, who received him at the appointed hour in the drawing-room of her own house. There was a single maid-servant in her company, who sat at work in a recess, so that she could scarcely overhear their discourse.

Bending lowly before her, Messer Filiberto expressed his deep sense of the honour she had conferred on him, and proceeded in impassioned terms to relate the origin and progress of his affection, his almost unexampled sufferings, and the sole hope which still rendered his life supportable to him He further assured her that his gratitude would be eternal, in proportion to the amount of the obligations under which she laid him. The sole reply which he received to his repeated and earnest protestations was, that she was resolved to remain faithful to the memory of her departed consort, and devote herself to the education of her only son. She was, moreover, grateful for his good opinion, though she was sure he could not fail to meet with ladies far more beautiful and more worthy of his regard. Finding that all his efforts proved quite fruitless and that it was impossible to make any impression, he threw himself once more at her feet with tears in his eyes, declaring that if she possessed the cruelty to deprive him of all hope, he should not long survive. The lady remained silent, and Messer Filiberto then summoning his utmost pride and fortitude to his aid, prepared to take his leave, beseeching her only, in the common courtesy and hospitality of the country, to grant him in return for his long love and sufferings a single kiss, which, against all social laws, she had before denied him, although it was generally yielded to all strangers who entered an hospitable roof "I wish," replied Donna Zilia, "I knew whether your affection for me is so strong as you pretend, for then, if you will but take a vow to observe one thing, I will grant what you require I shall then believe I am truly beloved, but never till then." The lover eagerly swore to observe the conditions she should impose, and seized the

price of the promise he had given. "Now, Signor Filiberto," exclaimed the lady, "prepare to execute the cruel sentence I shall impose. It is my will and pleasure that you no longer trouble me with such entreaties for the future, at least for some time; and if you are a true knight, you will not again unseal your lips for the space of three years." The lover was greatly surprised and shocked on hearing so harsh and unjust a sentence, though at the same time he signified his submission by his silence, merely nodding his assent Soon after, making the lady a low bow, he took his departure for his own residence. There, taking the affair into his most serious consideration, he at last came to the fixed resolution of submitting to this very severe penalty, as a punishment, at least, for his folly in so lightly sporting with his oath Suddenly, then, he became dumb, and feigning that he had met with some accident, he set out from Moncaliero on his return to Virle. His friends on finding him in this sad condition expressed the utmost sorrow and surprise; but as he retained his usual cheerfulness and sense enough to conduct his own affairs, they corresponded with him as well as if he had retained the nine parts of speech. Committing his affairs to the conduct of his steward, a distant relation in whom he had the highest confidence, he determined to set out on a tour for France, to beguile, if possible, the irksomeness of his situation. Of an extremely handsome person, and possessing noble and imposing manners, the misfortune under which he appeared to labour was doubly regretted wherever our hero made his appearance.

About the period of his arrival in France, Charles, the seventh of that name, was engaged in a warm and sanguinary war against the English, attempting to recover possession of the dominions which his predecessors had lost Having already driven them from Gascony and other parts, he was busily preparing to follow up his successes in Normandy. On arriving at this sovereign's court, Messer Filiberto had the good fortune to find several of his friends among the barons and cavaliers in the king's service, from whom he experienced a very kind reception, which was rather enhanced by their knowledge of the cruel misfortune under which he laboured But as it was not of such a nature as to incapacitate him for battle, he made signs that he wished to enter into the king's bodyguards; and being a knight of well-known prowess, this resolution was much applauded, no less by his majesty than by all his friends Having equipped himself in a suitable manner, he accompanied a division of the army intended to carry Rouen by assault. Here he performed such feats of strength and heroic valour in the presence of the king as to excite the greatest admiration; and on the third attack the place was carried by storm. His majesty afterwards inquiring more particularly into the history of the valiant knight, and learning that he was one of the lords of Virle in Piedmont, instantly conferred upon him an office in his royal household, and presented him with a large sum of money as an encouragement to persevere in the noble career he had commenced, observing at the same time that he trusted some of his physicians would be enabled to remove the impediment in his speech. Our hero, smiling at this

observation, expressed his gratitude for these royal favours as well as he could, shaking his fist at the same time, in token that he would punish his majesty's adversaries. Soon after, a sharp skirmish occurred between the French and the enemy for the possession of a bridge. The affair becoming serious, and the trumpets sounding to arms, the king, in order to encourage his troops, galloped towards the spot. Talbot, the commander of the English forces, was already there, and had nearly obtained possession of the bridge. His majesty was in the act of encouraging his soldiers, when Messer Filiberto, on his black charger, passed him at full speed with his company. With his lance in rest, he rode full at the horse of Talbot, which fell to the ground. Then seizing his huge club, and followed by his companions, he made such terrible havoc among the English, that, dealing death in every blow, he shortly dispersed them on all sides, and compelled them to abandon their position on the bridge. It was with difficulty that their commander himself effected his escape; while King Charles, following up his success, in a short time obtained possession of the whole of Normandy.

On this occasion the king returned public thanks to the heroic Filiberto, and in the presence of all the first nobility of his kingdom invested him with the command of several castles, with a hundred men-at-arms to attend him. He now stood so high in favour at court, that the monarch spared no expense to obtain the first professional advice that could be found in every country, with the hope of restoring him to the use of speech; and, after holding a solemn tournament in honour of the French victories, he proclaimed a reward of ten thousand francs to be paid to any physician, or other person, who should be fortunate enough to discover the means of restoring the use of speech to a dumb cavalier who had lost his voice in a single night. The fame of this reward reaching as far as Italy, many adventurers, induced by the hope of gain, sallied forth to try their skill, however vainly, since it was impossible to make him speak against his will. Incensed at observing such a concourse of people at his court under the pretence of performing experiments on the dumb gentleman, until the whole capital became infested with quacks, his majesty ordered a fresh proclamation to go forth, stating that whoever undertook to effect the cure should thenceforth, in case of failing to perform what he promised, be put to death, unless he paid down the sum of ten thousand francs. The good effect of this regulation was quickly perceived in the diminution of pretenders to infallible cures, few caring to risk their fortunes or their lives, in case of their inability to pay, though they had before been so liberal of their reputation. When the tidings of Messer Filiberto's good fortune and favour at the French king's court reached Moncaliero, Donna Zilia, imagining that his continued silence must be solely owing to the vow he had taken, and the time being at length nearly expired, fancied it would be no very bad speculation to secure the ten thousand francs for herself. Not doubting but that his love remained still warm and constant, and that she really possessed the art of removing the dumbness at her pleasure, she resolved to lose no time in setting off directly for Paris, where she was introduced to the

commissioners appointed to preside over Messer Filiberto's case "I am come, my lords," she observed, "hearing that a gentleman of the court has for some time past lost his speech, to restore to him that invaluable faculty, possessing for that purpose some secret remedies which I trust will prove efficacious. In the course of a fortnight he will probably be one of the most eloquent men at court; and I am quite willing to run the risk of the penalty if I perform not my engagement as required. There must, however, be no witness to my proceedings; the patient must be intrusted entirely to me. I should not like every pretender to obtain a knowledge of the secret I possess; it is one which will require the utmost art in its application." Rejoiced to hear her speak with so much confidence on the subject, the commissioners immediately despatched a message to Messer Filiberto, informing him that a lady had just arrived from Piedmont, boasting that she could perform what the most learned of the faculty in France had failed to do, by restoring the dumb to speech. The answer to this was an invitation to wait upon our hero at his own residence, when he recognised the cruel beauty who had imposed so severe a penance, and concluded at the same time that she had undertaken the journey not out of any affection for him, but with the most mercenary views. Reflecting on his long sufferings and unrequited affection, his love was suddenly converted into a strong desire of revenge: he therefore came to a determination of still playing the mute, and not deigning to exchange a single word with her, merely bowed to her politely at a distance. After some moments' silence, the lady, finding that he had no inclination to speak, inquired in a gentle tone whether he was at a loss to discover in whose company he was. He gave her to understand that he knew her perfectly well, but that he had not yet recovered his speech, motioning, at the same time, with his fingers towards his mouth. On this, she informed him that she now absolved him from his vow, that she had travelled to Paris for that purpose, and that he might talk as much as he pleased. But the dumb lover, only motioning his thanks, still continued as silent as before; until the lady, losing all patience, very freely expressed her disappointment and displeasure. Still it availed her nothing, and, fearful of the consequences to herself if he persisted in his unaccountable obstinacy, she had at length recourse to caresses and concessions, which, whatever advantage he chose to take of them, proved ultimately as fruitless to restore his eloquence as every other means. The tears and prayers of the lady to prevail upon him to speak became now doubly clamorous, while she sorely repented her former cruelty and folly, which had brought her into the predicament of forfeiting either ten thousand francs or her life. She would immediately have been placed under a military guard, had it not been for the intercession of the dumb gentleman, who made signs that they should desist. The penalty, however, was to be enforced; but the lady, being of an excessively avaricious turn, resolved rather to die than to furnish the prescribed sum, and thus deprive her beloved boy of a portion of his inheritance. When reduced to this extremity, Messer Filiberto, believing that upon the whole he had sufficiently revenged himself, took com-

passion upon her sufferings, and hastened to obtain an audience of the king. He entreated as a special favour that his majesty would remit the fine, and grant liberty to her, as well as to some other debtors, which, in the utmost surprise at hearing the sound of his voice, the king promised to do. He then proceeded to inform his majesty of the whole history of his attachment to the lady, and the strange results by which it had been attended to both parties, though fortunately all had ended well Messer Filiberto then hastened to hold an audience with the lady, seriously proposing to give her a little good advice ; and she was quite as much rejoiced as his majesty when she first heard him speak. "You may recollect, madam," he observed, "that some time ago, when at Moncaliero, I expressed the most ardent and constant attachment to you, an attachment which I did not then think that time could have ever diminished. But your conduct in cheating me into the vow of silence, and your cruelty to me as well before that time as since, have wrought a complete change in my sentiments towards you. I have acquired wealth and honours ; I stand high in the favour of my monarch ; and having, I think, taken ample revenge upon you by the fears and trouble you have experienced, I have not only granted you your liberty and your life, but ordered you to be freely supplied with every convenience and facility for your return home. I need not advise you to conduct yourself in future with care and prudence, in all the economical virtues you are reputed to be unrivalled, but I would venture to hint, that from the example I have in this instance afforded you, you will be more cautious how you sport with the feelings of those who love you, as it is an old saying, that the wily are often taken in their own nets" He then provided her with an honourable escort and money to defray her expenses, while he himself not long after received the hand of a young beauty of the court, bestowed upon him by his royal master. By this union he received an accession of several castles and domains, and sent for his witty young friend from Spoleto to share with him a portion of his prosperity Still retaining his favour at court, upon the death of Charles VII. he continued to enjoy the same appointments and the same influence under Louis XI, his successor.

PART III. NOVELLA XXXIX.

In the time of Lodovico Sforza, the unfortunate Duke of Milan, there was kept, among other living curiosities, in the ducal palace, a large and beautiful ape, whose amusing yet harmless manners, full of practical jests and witticisms, had long obtained for him the liberty of going at large. Such, indeed, was his reputation for prudence and good conduct, that he was not merely permitted the range of the whole palace, but frequently visited the outskirts, in the vicinity of Maine, of Cusano, and San Giovanni, and was not unfrequently seen conversing with some friend upon the walls. In fact, most people were eager to show their respect for him by presenting him with fruits and other

dainties, no less from regard to his ducal patron than to his own intrinsic merits. The singular pleasure he afforded to all classes of society by his happy talents of various kinds was always a sufficient passport from place to place. But his favourite resort, among many others, was the house of an ancient gentlewoman, situated in the parish of San Giovanni, upon the walls, where he cultivated the society of her two sons, one of whom in particular, though at the head of a family, invariably received his monkey guest in the most amiable manner, making him as much at home as if he had been the lady's favourite lapdog. These young men, perceiving their aged mother amused with the animal's unequalled exhibitions of his art, vied with each other in paying the most gratifying attentions to his monkeyship, and would certainly, had he not happened to have been ducal property, either have purchased or stolen him, merely out of regard to their mother. The whole household, likewise, received orders to treat him with the same invariable kindness and respect, studying what appeared most agreeable to his taste, so as to give him an affection for the old lady's house. This last motive weighed so greatly with his apeship, that he almost deserted his other neighbours in order to enjoy more of the society of these very agreeable friends, although he was careful to return to his own ducal residence at the castle in the evening. During this time, the aged lady becoming very infirm, no longer left her chamber, where she was affectionately attended by her whole family, who supplied her with every alleviation in the power of medical advice to bestow. Thither, occasionally, our facetious hero was also introduced for the purpose of awakening a smile on the wan features of the patient by his strange and amusing manners, receiving some delicate morsels in return from the poor lady's own hand. As he possessed a natural taste, in common with most of his race, for every kind of sweets, he was in the habit of besieging the old lady's room with great perseverance and assiduity, feasting upon the best confectionery with far higher zest than the poor patient herself. Worn out at length by long infirmities and age, she soon after departed this world, having first with becoming piety confessed herself and received the holy sacraments of our Church, with the communion and extreme unction at the final close.

While the funeral ceremonies were preparing, and the last offices rendered to the deceased, the monkey appeared to pay remarkable attention to all that was going forward. The corpse being dressed, and placed on the funeral bier, the holy sisterhood then attended with the usual ceremonies, offering up hymns and aves to the Virgin for the soul of the deceased. The body was afterwards borne to the parish church not far distant, not unobserved by the monkey, who watched the procession depart. But he soon turned his attention to the state of things around him; and after feasting on the cake and wine, being a little elevated, he began to empty the boxes and drawers, and examine the contents. Having observed the deceased in her last habiliments, and the form of her headdress when she was laid out, the facetious ape immediately began to array himself in the cast-off garments, exactly in the manner he had witnessed, and so perfect was the resemblance, that when he had covered himself up in bed,

On hearing the sudden crash, and the terrified exclamations of the good friar, "*Jesus, Jesus, Domine, adjuva me*," the brothers, followed by the rest of the party, rushed towards the spot, eagerly inquiring what dreadful accident had occurred. Both of the holy personages gazed on the guests without being able to utter a word, but their pallid looks spoke volumes sufficient to answer all demands. The poor clerk fainted away, no less from excess of fear than from the terrible fall he had just received. Having obliged both to partake of some restoratives, the priest at length summoned courage enough to say, "It is true, my dear children, I have indeed seen your poor departed mother in the form of a fierce demon;" when just as he had finished these words, the cause of all their disturbance, desirous of securing the remnants of the feast, was heard approaching at a pretty brisk and clattering pace down the unlucky stairs. Without giving any of the party time to discover a fresh place of refuge, or even to prepare their minds for his reception, he bounced suddenly into the room, armed cap-à-pie, in the fearful petticoats of the deceased. His head was dressed to a nicety exactly in the same manner as the old lady's, and his whole body very decently arrayed in her late habiliments. He placed himself in the midst of the company, all of whom stood rooted to the spot, silent and awe-stricken, awaiting the dreadful scene that might ensue. The wrinkles in his countenance certainly bore no small resemblance to those in the features of the deceased, to which his very serious demeanour added not a little. Yet, after a few secret ejaculations for divine protection on the part of the guests, the facetious visitor was soon recognised by one of the brothers, the only person who had possessed courage to look the monkey in the face on his sudden entrance into the room. Momentary prayers and exclamations were then as suddenly converted into bursts of laughter, and in a few minutes the author of all their sufferings began to resume the usual hilarity of his disposition, to exhibit his best manœuvres in the saltic art, and with the greatest politeness severally to accost the company. He evinced, however, the utmost aversion to disrobing himself of his new honours, snapping at any one who ventured to approach him, while he performed his antics in the ablest and most whimsical manner In full dress he thus set out on his return to the castle, meeting with reiterated plaudits as he passed along the streets. In this state he was welcomed home by the domestics of the castle, producing infinite diversion among the courtiers, and all those who witnessed his exploits. Nor did the two brothers punish him for his involuntary fault; rather kindly permitting him to return to his old haunts, where he feasted and frolicked away his days, until he attained to a happy and respectable old age.

PART IV. NOVELLA XVIII.

DURING the period of my captivity among the Turks, which continued more than forty years, I was conducted by different masters into various

On the liberation of the island, Antonio Loredano, the Venetian admiral, arriving with a strong force, and hearing of the extraordinary exploits of the maiden Marulla, immediately requested to be introduced to her, when he expressed the greatest admiration both of her conversation and appearance. In presence of the Venetian soldiers and the citizens of Coccino, he next bestowed the highest praises on her unequalled generosity and heroism, her filial affection and other virtues, for all of which she was so proudly distinguished. He then presented her with several rich gifts on the part of the republic, and his example was immediately followed by the commanders of the different galleys and by the people of the island, who vied with each other in laying their contributions at her feet When more than sufficient for a handsome marriage portion had been collected, the admiral proceeded to address the young heroine in the following words: "Most excellent and noble lady, in order to convince you of the sincerity with which our Venetian senate is ever inclined to honour real worth, in whichever sex it may be found, and to display its gratitude for the obligations conferred upon it, I have here offered you these slight tokens of its regard Deign to accept them as an earnest only of higher rewards, when I shall have forwarded to our noble senators a more particular account of the splendid actions you have performed in defence of their territories and of the country to which you owe your birth In the meantime, bright and beautiful as you are brave, should you deign to cast your eye on the first and proudest of your countrymen who have combated at your side, be assured that he will feel himself honoured by such a preference, and that his interests will be nobly promoted by our senate of Venice!"

In returning her grateful thanks to the admiral and the Venetian republic for the generous consideration of her poor services, the maiden heroine, in reference to the last article of their proposals, replied that high as she estimated true bravery, it was by no means superior physical courage and daring deeds in man which constituted his highest claims to her regard. These, without the still nobler attributes of an intellectual and moral character, were nearly worthless in her eyes, when destitute of those virtues which embellish an unstained and upright life, and produce great and honourable actions.

Repeated plaudits and commendations from all ranks of people immediately followed this truly noble and beautiful reply; the admiral afterwards declaring that the innate worth and wisdom exhibited in her language and demeanour had not merely surpassed his expectations, but deserved to be compared with the happiest instances of feminine excellence and accomplishments recorded in the annals either of Greece or Rome

An accurate and eloquent account of the whole of this interesting scene was shortly after despatched to the noble senators of Venice, who, entering upon a consideration of the singular merits of their fair champion, not only decreed that her espousals should be splendidly provided for and celebrated by the republic, but that numerous privileges and exemptions from the public burdens imposed upon her fellow-subjects should be likewise secured to her and to her children for evermore.

Novels of Francesco Sansovino.

FRANCESCO SANSOVINO.



THIS novelist was the son of the distinguished sculptor and architect, Jacopo Sansovino, and was born at Rome in the year 1521. Pope Julius III is said to have officiated as his sponsor at the sacred font. He was first brought up to the profession of the law; but as he had no inclination for that study, he made but little progress in it, and is supposed to have soon after relinquished it upon his marriage, when he took up his residence in Venice, where he lived till the year 1586. He there produced many of his novels, and devoted himself altogether to literary labours and pursuits. He was a voluminous writer, which, however, by no means atones for the want of genuine merit, a failing of which he has, not without justice, been accused, his tales affording few specimens worthy of selection. Their want of originality is one of the least faults ascribed to them, inasmuch as he has been charged with having mutilated and disguised his borrowed subjects in the most unceremonious manner. The best claim that writers of this description have upon our notice (and it must be allowed there are too many such among the Italian novelists), consists in the copious materials with which they supply the critic, whose delightful task it is to detect, by long and minute labours, a few rare gems sparkling amidst a mass of inferior productions.

The character of Sansovino as a writer has been very fairly appreciated by Apostolo Zeno in his learned annotations to the well-known "Biblioteca Italiana" of Fontanini. He there observes that a great number of the stories inserted in Sansovino's collection as his own are obviously to be referred to the "Decameron" of Boccaccio; and that he has likewise taken frequent liberties with those of Bandello, without noticing the name of that author; though many other writers are mentioned in the list of authors whom he has adduced as supplying the materials of his work. Still Sansovino is by no means a solitary instance of the predatory genius of the novelists of the sixteenth century, indulged at the expense of the earlier and better writers of Italy. Nor while La Fontaine and other French writers, as well as our English dramatists, drew so largely from the same source, do we see any cogent reason why the Italians themselves should not be allowed to enjoy a reciprocal traffic in their own national productions.

SEVENTH DAY, NOVELLA VI.

OTTO, the third emperor of that name, on his return from Rome, where he had just been invested with the imperial dignity by the reigning pontiff, Gregory V., touched at Florence on his way to his German dominions. The whole of Tuscany, then under the imperial sway, was committed to the government of Ugone, Marquis of Brandenburg, cousin-german to the Emperor, a man of approved reputation, and esteemed for his love of justice by all ranks of people. Now it happened during the Emperor's stay that the festival of San Giovanni the Baptist, the tutelary saint of Florence, was everywhere celebrated throughout the city, and the concourse of guests at the palace was likewise very great. Among these, the Emperor was particularly struck with a beautiful young lady, daughter to a gentleman of the name of Berti dei Ravignani. She was esteemed the most lovely and accomplished maiden, not only in Florence, but throughout all Tuscany. The eyes of the company were frequently riveted upon her, and those of the Emperor never once wandered from her face. Such was the impression he received, that, unable to detect the least fault in her face or form, and charmed with the sweetness of her manners, he gave way to the most unbounded admiration, in spite of the restraints imposed upon him by his birth and station. The more he gazed, and the more he conversed with her, the deeper sunk the emotions he began to entertain, until, at the close of the festival, on taking his leave of her, he returned to his own palace silent and unhappy, his whole soul absorbed in the recollection of the exquisite charms, both of mind and person, of the lady he had just seen. Such influence over him did this passion at length assume, that so far from being able to extirpate it, he could no longer disguise his feelings; and doubtful only in what manner to proceed, he resolved to consult one of the most prudent gentlemen of his bed-chamber To him he committed the task of obtaining further particulars concerning the beloved object, giving him at the same time proper instructions by which he might discover her. In this manner he shortly became acquainted with her father's name and the whole genealogy of her family. The gentleman was of good extraction, but in somewhat confined circumstances, and by no means of a disposition, either by his industry or his wit, to improve them.

Scorning the idea of acting in any way either artfully or dishonourably, yet being determined to pursue his object, the Emperor resolved to hint the affair to the lady's father through his confidant, and proceed throughout the whole transaction, both with regard to the father and the daughter, candidly and openly. With this view, having learned that his mission to Messer Berti, owing to the expectations of wealth and influence which it excited in his mind, had met with a favourable reception, the Emperor invited him to his royal table; and lavishing upon him every mark of attention, soon entered into familiar discourse, though without alluding, in the most distant manner, to the subject nearest his heart. Such marks of favour would have been

quite sufficient to dazzle the judgment and warp the virtuous feelings of a wiser and better man than poor Berti dei Ravignani; and so elevated was he with these sudden glimpses of court favour, that he could not forbear boasting of them, on his return home, to his daughter. He soon afterwards announced, with a very consequential air, that he intended to invite the Emperor and a few friends to dinner, that he was already extremely well disposed towards him; that she must take care to put on her best looks, and it was impossible to say to what height of fortune they might not aspire. Intelligent and virtuous as she was beautiful, the fair Gualdiada on hearing these words, though some suspicions flashed across her mind, disdained to notice them, being determined to rely upon herself and to act as circumstances might require. On the appointed day, therefore, the Emperor attended, with a single gentleman, the summons of Messer Berti to feast with him at his house, where he had the pleasure of being introduced into the society of the beautiful object of all his hopes. Here, while attempting to make himself as agreeable as possible, the Emperor had occasion to observe the nobleness and simplicity of her mind and sentiments, no less than her surpassing beauty and the artless graces of her person. And however desirous of disguising the warmth of his feelings from motives of delicacy, heightened by the high opinion which he began to entertain of her, he nevertheless could not refrain from availing himself of an opportunity of avowing his sentiments, declaring that he had struggled long and painfully with them, and that he could not help telling her so, however fearful he might be of incurring her displeasure. He trusted she would consider that in all countries and all ages, the most cautious as well as the most lofty of human characters had at some period of their lives experienced the same irresistible sentiments which now impelled him, against his better feelings and judgment, to admire, and to avow his admiration and his passion; a passion which, however unjust and ungenerous it was, in vain he attempted to suppress. He urged that so many illustrious instances, both in Greek and Roman history, would in some measure plead his excuse; the Cæsars, the Hannibals, the Massinissas, the Antonys; the last of whom he verily believed had no apology to offer for his weakness at all equal to that which stood arrayed in superior charms before him. "And if you deign not now to listen to me," continued the Emperor, as he threw himself at the lady's feet, "I feel that my sceptre and my diadem, with all their pomp, are worthless in my eyes. Take them, or take at least more than they are worth—the heart that is above them all."

A variety of emotions chased each other over the features of the fair girl as she listened to the words of the Emperor; gratified pride and vanity, terror, shame, and doubt, were all there; but these were again overpowered and absorbed in the more overwhelming sense of love—a love which, although she ventured not to avow it, clung to another object. Releasing her hand, therefore, from that of the Emperor, she made no reply, but turning away, burst into tears. Her royal lover, nearly as much distressed as herself, now entreated her forgiveness, accusing himself of the greatest thoughtlessness and

cruelty in having thus inconsiderately tried her feelings. In the most soothing and respectful terms he entreated her to compose her mind, and fully to rely upon his humanity and honour. As there appeared to be some degree of mystery in her manner of receiving him, he said that he should feel highly gratified to be considered worthy of her confidence, however painful the sacrifice he might have to make in consequence, if indeed she could never return his love. Expressing her gratitude for these assurances of kindness and respect, the fair Gualdrada, fearful of offending the Emperor in the avowal she was preparing to make, fell at his feet and besought him to forgive her temerity in venturing to refuse his love. She then confessed that on the same night of the festival in which she had been presented to his imperial highness, Guido, a young cavalier of his court, had also seen and sought her love; that they had since had several interviews, but that neither of them possessing wealth, she had not ventured to make known his offer to her father. Without a moment's hesitation, the Emperor, thanking her for this proof of confidence, and recovering all his former generosity and magnanimity of feeling, instantly despatched orders for the young cavalier to attend him. On his arrival, presenting the astonished soldier to the weeping and blushing Gualdrada, he observed with his usual mildness: "It is my pleasure, Guido, that you should espouse this lady, the daughter of a noble though impoverished house;" and the next day, holding a splendid festival in honour of their nuptials, he himself presented the hand of the fair Gualdrada to his favourite Guido, and conferred upon him a handsome fortune.

TENTH DAY, NOVELLA VIII.

THERE were once two spruce young gentlemen who had more reason to pique themselves upon their good descent than upon the strength of their mental endowments. To use a familiar expression much applied by the good people of Milan, they both belonged to the parish of San Simpliciano, and from a great similarity of disposition, they had contracted so strict an intimacy, that they were seldom to be seen asunder. When they happened to be in other company, they invariably aimed at leading the conversation to points of fashionable interest, in which alone they were calculated to shine, displaying their abilities in criticising the tastes of others and indirectly complimenting each other. Their continued repetition of the same fashionable nonsense, so impertinently introduced upon all occasions, had at length the effect of wearying and disgusting all parties where their presence was tolerated. During fine summer weather they were in the habit of wearing the most costly white silk dresses; their vests were of white velvet, their ruffs of the whitest cambric, their pantaloons and stockings of white silk, and their hats of white velvet with white feathers in them. And yet they had the assurance to appear thus accoutred in public, displaying their feathers with all the vanity of peacocks, as they turned arm in arm along the piazzas, full of their own perfections,

and eager to attract the notice of spectators, who failed not indeed to smile as they passed; a circumstance which these young sparks placed entirely to their own credit. So pestiferous did they at length become to society by this display of their vain folly and presumption, that whenever they appeared in a perfectly new suit, their friends invariably avoided them, as they were certain to be regaled with a dissertation upon French tailors and the newest points and lacings then in mode. "Observe these linings! how well they sit upon this waistcoat! how brilliant are these feathers! By Jove! how nobly they wave with the least breath of air. Yet they would not sit well upon any one, let me tell you; there is an art in a man's wearing a handsome dress by no means common." And in this way they would run on by the hour together. Among others who had thus suffered under their intolerable rattle was a sensible and spirited young fellow, who had a particular enmity to the race of fops, and made a solemn vow, in a moment of irritation, to hit upon some species of revenge that might tend to remove such a nuisance from society, and perhaps put the authors of it on their good behaviour in future. With this view he conceived a plan which he thought could not fail to produce a happy effect, and only waited for a good opportunity of carrying it into execution.

This soon occurred during the summer season, when our cavaliers were in the habit, as we have said, of assuming their white array, and when they frequented the neighbourhood of our more sensible friend's residence, in order to make themselves agreeable to a party of ladies who were accustomed to walk near his house. One evening, therefore, he stationed himself at his garden gate, as if enjoying the coolness of the air, expecting these two giddy sparks, who in a short time came fluttering by, having displayed their plumes to the amusement of the ladies, who had now returned home Stepping suddenly forwards and seizing a hand of each, their friend declared he would make them his prisoners for the rest of the evening; for he had just received some excellent wine, of which he wished to have their opinion. They accepted his challenge, and, with a fashionable roll of their shoulders, accompanied him in, when, finding the servants busily clearing the dining-room, he invited the gentlemen to go and give him their opinion of his selection of wines as they lay in his vaults, where they might also taste it perfectly cool; observing that he often went there when he found every other place in the world too hot for him. Each of them, then, seizing his glass, mightily amused at the idea, they followed their friend into the vaults, a servant preceding them with a torch, while his fellows were laughing heartily at their master's humour in the room above, one of whom, being intrusted with the secret, had communicated it to all the rest. Several guests in the drawing-room were likewise waiting the event, with no slight mirth exhibited in their countenances. While the glasses were filling, the two coxcombs were busily criticising the various sorts of wines submitted to their taste, and enjoying the coolness as they rambled about the vaults. Now there was a large vessel filled with water lying near for the purpose the host had in view. It was of such respectable dimensions as apparently to defy the exertions of a single person to remove it. Attract-

ing the notice of his guests, the host, as if casually passing, observed, "Large as you seem to think it, there is one of my fellows who can throw it upon his shoulders and carry it upstairs for me whenever I please." One of our fashionables, who likewise piqued himself upon his bodily prowess, instantly laid hands upon it, but finding it resist his efforts even to stir it, he pretty roundly swore he would wager a dozen of champagne that their host was mistaken. But the fact was again as positively affirmed, till the dispute growing warm on both sides, the young gentleman declared that it would be the fairest way to put it to the proof. "I have no objection," returned the wily host; "here is the very rascal we were just speaking of, he has shoulders broad enough to bear the world. so take up that huge tub, you rogue, and walk Show the gentlemen the way upstairs, and take heed you do not let it fall." Forthwith he pitched it upon his neck; and the master leading the way, the two disciples of San Simpliciano somewhat imprudently followed in his rear. The steps were tolerably steep, and the porter, feigning great difficulty, just as he had reached the top, suddenly tripped, and sent the contents of the vessel back again, flying all abroad on every side. Strange was the confusion, and the sputtering, and the exclamations which the two unfortunate fashionables now made; still more strange was the sprinkling and spoiling of their delicate new garments, which truly cut a woful figure Instead of a pure white, they now exhibited all the colours in the rainbow, with the addition of black patches, which stuck to their fine ermine, while they sighed and sobbed with the effects of the cold bathing they had just received. The water had been deeply impregnated with ink and assafœtida, and with other nauseous drugs, to such a degree that neither of them was free from the taint for more than a twelvemonth. The porter, however, had the humanity to prevent the tub itself from falling, which would otherwise have totally overwhelmed the dripping sparks, who were by no means made of such stout materials as to withstand the shock it might have occasioned, being of that brittle texture which, like glass, will bear no rough usage, though it can receive a polish. The rogue of a porter instantly took to his heels on viewing the awful ruin he had wrought, while his master, pretending to be in the highest degree offended at his negligence, hastened after him, leaving our poor heroes to digest the venom of his joke as they best could. But not possessing wit enough to see into the jest, they shook hands before they left with the happy and triumphant host, who watched them, along with some of his guests, tripping homewards as fast as they well could, shivering as if in an ague fit, to the infinite amusement of all the passengers.

Novels of Anton-Francesco Doni.

ANTON-FRANCESCO DONI.

THE subject of our present notice flourished early in the sixteenth century, and his productions are of a very voluminous and diversified character. His novels bear only a small proportion to the rest of his writings, and, with an eccentricity of humour that marked all his actions, he dispersed them at intervals, as if to relieve the tedium of his more serious lucubrations, throughout a variety of other works. In a collection very recently published in Italy,[1] they amount to the number of forty, various in their style and character, and extracted from a variety of sources: from his "Letters," from his work entitled "Librerie," his "Zucca," his "Marmi," his "Mondi," his "Moral Filosofia," from his vast "Commentary upon Burchiello," and from his "Pistolotti d'Amore."

"Though occasionally rude and inverted in point of style, they are by no means wanting in spirit, and in those sallies of caustic wit and humour," observes the Italian editor, "which give so high a relish to works of a similar kind." Previous to the late collection, Doni had already been admitted into the rank of approved novelists by Count Borromeo and the classic Poggiali, though he is seldom to be met with in the numerous selections, entitled "Novellieri," from the fictitious productions of some of his more popular countrymen. This, in some measure, probably arose from the same whimsical genius that seems to have influenced all his actions, many humorous traits of which are recounted, and which led him to entertain little anxiety as to the fate of his own productions. To the long list of these contained in the Borromean catalogue, and the notices of him by Poggiali, Tiraboschi, and other writers, there is added a still more voluminous account, accompanied by critical and historical remarks, in the collection of tales before referred to. As these are, however, of far too extensive a nature to admit of further commentary here, we must confine our attention to the more popular traits of his life and character, which have been treated by some of his biographers with the same humour and eccentricity which marked the style and manners of the original. Tiraboschi affords several examples of his peculiarities, though far inferior in point of singularity of language to the pen of a still more modern writer, Signor Capugnano, who has prefixed a very amusing account of the author's life to the recent publication of his novels.

It may not prove unentertaining, perhaps, to the English reader to

[1] Edizione di soli esemplari ottanta, con particolare cura eseguita, per i Dilettanti delle Antiche Novelle Italiane Edited by Bartolommeo Gamba. 1815

extract a few specimens of this very whimsical account of a whimsical genius, taking care not to deprive either the author or his biographer of any portion of their burlesque humour. In this respect they will be found to be congenial spirits, the biographer vieing with his subject in the singularity of his manner of treating it. "Doni," observes Signor Capugnano, "was born in Florence, about the year 1513, and he had no sooner cast his side teeth, than he selected for the scene of his labours, both night and day, some apartments that look out upon the left side of the Annunziata There he was to be seen, arrayed in his long dark cloak, sometimes studious and alone, and sometimes in the company of those who had so high a conceit of him as to think him capable of instructing Cardinal d'Arezzo himself, not long since deceased. Imagining, however, in a few years, that his gown[1] sat somewhat uneasy, and looked somewhat too lugubrious, besides being so long as to prevent him from picking his way through life's dirty paths without fear of soiling himself, he threw it off altogether, and taking a few free bounds into the air, declared that he would no longer serve anybody, but in future live only according to his own laws. Then, in order that he might avoid the inquiries of every fool of an acquaintance to know the motives and reasons of his proceedings, he set off for Venice, resolving to settle there upon his own estate, which he held under the crown of his hat. His pen was put into immediate requisition, being the only means, as he believed, of obtaining an introduction into the great audience-room of the world, 'e per godere quest 'aria e quest 'acqua' But soon finding that 'faggots are not to be bound with a sausage,' he withdrew to the pleasant hills of Monselice, surrounded with a delightful view of the castle, and more useful gardens, besides a vast rocky tower erected some ages before the grandfather of the famous Ezelino made his appearance in the world."—*Vita del Doni*, pp. 2, 3.

Here the biographer proceeds to relate his study of astronomy and philosophy, with pursuits and inquiries of a still more free and liberal cast, which seem to have awakened the jealousy of the Inquisition: "Uscì un tuono che gli scosse tutte le ossa, e gli gelò il sangue nelle vene" There came a sound that shook him to his very bones, and congealed the blood in his veins; and he sought refuge for a period near Ancona, whence he did not again depart until the season became more mild. He then returned to his residence at Monselice, where he closed his career at no very advanced age, in the year 1574, lamented and esteemed for his convivial disposition, his learning, and his wit.

NOVELLA I.

The dowager queen of Salimspruch had a daughter named Galierina, about five years of age. As she was walking in the garden, this child happened to find a young lizard, with which she ran to her mother in

[1] He is said by Tiraboschi to have assumed the ecclesiastical habit, which he afterwards laid aside

great glee, throwing it, as young girls are apt to do, upon her mother's lap, which so terrified the queen, that she declared, in her anger, she would never consent to bestow her daughter's hand in marriage until the reptile had grown to the size of the girl herself. She even swore by her crown that she would execute this threat; a vow which greatly displeased the governess of the fair child, who, being affectionately attached to her, vowed on her part to take the best care of the lizard she could. And such was the efficacy of this vow, that, with the blessing of Heaven and fine feeding, the young lizard began to grow and grow, nor ever stopped until it became nearly as large as a crocodile. Every one was astonished on beholding it, and greatly praised the care and prudence of Donna Spira, who had thus rescued her fair pupil from the fate of dying an old maid. The latter having attained to maturity, it was deemed proper to try the effect of chance in the disposal of her hand, with which view the queen resolved to kill the lizard and extract its lungs, in order to exercise the sagacity of her suitors. "Now," said she, "we will proclaim a grand feast and tournament, and invite all the cavaliers in the world to try their fortune in the joust, and whoever afterwards guesses the name of the reptile which possessed these lungs, let him have my daughter and half this kingdom as a reward for his pains."

Far and wide, throughout all cities and nations, spread these happy tidings of a royal tournament and the marriage of Queen Pilessa's beauteous daughter. What magnificent trains of lords and dukes, counts and marquises, of all ages and nations, were seen gathering towards the happy spot! Long they fought, and fell, and conquered; after which, at the trumpet's sound, were exhibited to view in the midst of all the lizard's lungs, and proclamation was made with a loud voice that whatsoever prince or lord should declare to what animal these relics had belonged should be entitled to the princess and half the kingdom as her dower. Upon this, the name of every kind of creature in the world but the right one was quickly pronounced, until it came to the turn of the Duke of Milesi, who, enjoying the good graces of Donna Spira, had fixed his eye boldly upon her beautiful charge. The nurse at length hit upon the following ingenious method, as she thought, of acquainting him with the real nature of the poor lizard's lungs. She cast her eye upon one of the ugliest hunchbacks that was ever seen, as the least suspicious person she could employ, and beckoning him, she said, "If you will promise to be secret, I will make you one of the richest hunchbacks that was ever known; you have only to be wise and keep silence." On receiving his promise, she gave him a purse of ducats, saying, "Hasten to the Duke of Milesi, and whisper him, on the part of the young lady, that the lungs belonged to a lizard." Upon which, repeating his oath of secrecy, the ugly hunchback left the nurse; and standing for some time apart, he considered whether it would be most prudent to inform the Duke or avail himself of the information on his own account. At length he determined that it would be better to possess half the kingdom for himself than the favour of the reigning prince; and so taking Fortune by the forelock, he ventured upon the following bold manœuvre.

Making his way before the queen, he thus addressed her : "Knowing that your royal blood was ever faithful to its engagements, and relying upon the honour of your crown, I appear here to say to what creature these precious relics belonged, and claim in return your daughter and half of the kingdom." "Certainly, it is so," replied the queen; while all the barons and courtiers burst into a loud laugh as he pronounced them to be the lungs of a lizard. "Nay, let those laugh who win," cried the hunchback; "for I myself once brought up a lizard that grew as large as my back, until putting it one night to bed without its nightcap on, it caught such a bad cold, that before I had time to have it properly cured, it absolutely died of suffocation." The whole company upon this laughed still louder, saying, "Good! very good! was ever anything like it?" But the little hunchback continued, "It is, however, as I say; because, on dissecting my lizard, I found its lungs were made exactly the same as these" The queen replied, "Since Fortune has so far favoured you, I am bound to observe my engagement; and now truly the hand of my daughter with half of the kingdom is your own."

Mr. Hunchback was accordingly arrayed like a courtier, and exalted above all the barons of the land · there was no denying that he was the fair princess's future spouse. Sad, however, was the envy and heart-burning of the suitors to behold such a monster so well versed in the anatomy of lizards and entitled to the fair princess's hand. Truly they would have laid foul hands upon him and eaten him up alive, could they have found an opportunity, but he kept close to his princess's side. But what was the indignation of her nurse, when, expecting to behold the handsome Duke, she saw this little wretch elevated in his place! Casting upon him the eye of a basilisk, though she ventured not to break out into open abuse, she muttered to herself, "Oh, villain of a hunchback! by the holy cross of our Lord I will make thee pay dearly for this!" Then, full of the most desperate thoughts, she proceeded to consult with her unhappy charge, who also viewed him with evident reluctance, and listened but too willingly to every possible means of despatching him in preference to receiving him as her lord. But the glorious tidings having already gone abroad, there came a number of fresh hunchbacks, flocking to the royal festival of their companion, who performed a variety of admirable tricks, to the astonishment of all the court. This added not a little to the influence of the new prince, who seemed greatly pleased at the praises which they on all sides elicited. But to cut short the scene, which he thought began to trench a little upon his dignity, when the presumptuous hunchbacks approached him familiarly to receive their reward, their royal brother gave each of them a kick upon their humps, and ordered them to be taken down into the kitchen.

Now this unkind usage of his old friends was extremely grating to the gentle feelings of his princess; she therefore gave secret orders that these very facetious hunchbacks should be invited for another day, in order to receive the due recompense of their humorous tricks In the meantime, under various pretexts, she contrived to keep her royal consort at a distance until the day appointed for the return of the hunch-

backs arrived. They were directly introduced into the princess's chamber, where she opened upon their astonished eyes a variety of trunks filled with costly apparel; but, just as she was in the act of presenting some to them, the footsteps of her crooked spouse were heard actually ascending the staircase. There was no alternative but to thrust the little crooked fellows into the trunks, which was no sooner done than the royal hunchback stepped into the chamber. All was still as death; for had they made the least noise they would infallibly have been hanged, to satisfy the foolish jealousy of his highness. He remained with the princess some time, which placed the lives of his trembling subjects in the utmost jeopardy, as they were already beginning to gasp for breath. Still he stayed and stayed; and when at length, on his taking his leave, the princess hastened to open the trunks, what was her surprise and sorrow on finding that all her amusing guests were quite dead! After breathing harder and harder, they had gone into convulsions, and then feeble kicks had scarcely reached the ears of the royal spouses. Closing the trunks, however, she resolved to make the best of a bad business; and consulting with her nurse, they forthwith confided the whole affair to a faithful courtier, presenting him at the same time with a sum of money. With this he directly proceeded to purchase three large bags, exactly alike, and calling a stout porter, he gave them to him, saying, "Follow me," and marched back as fast as he could, straight into the palace. They first took one of the little deceased, and squeezing him till he came within the dimensions of the bag, the princess, addressing the porter, said, "Do you mark me? Carry this sack away, and throw it, just as it is, into the river. Here are ten ducats: but take heed how you open it, and when you come back you shall have twenty more." So the porter threw the burden on his shoulder, saying, "I wish I had more such jobs as these;" and after pitching it into the river, he hastened back as fast as he could. In the chamber he found the same identical burden lying there which he thought he had just disposed of, the second hunchback having assumed the place of the first. Testifying no little surprise, the lady said to him, "Do not be alarmed; but truly he is a sly villain, as you see, and delights to plague people. He will be sure to come back again if you do not throw him far enough, and sink him in the river; this time you must take better care." Perfectly satisfied with the ducats, the man took up his burden and again launched it into the deepest part of the river he could find, and staying to watch it fairly sink, he exclaimed in a joyful tone, "I think you are fairly gone at last;" for the night was now setting in, and he did not much relish another journey along the banks of the river. Taking a light, however, he returned into the chamber, and beheld a third sack ready prepared for him; and seizing it in no little anger, he bore it away. But as soon as he had made his way through the crowd, he determined at all hazards to know with what kind of a devil he had to deal; and opening the bag, he found an ugly little hunchback in it. "Oh, thou cursed beast!" he cried, "I will try to end thee now;" and taking out a huge knife, he severed the head from the body. Then thrusting it into the sack, filled with stones and iron, he once more committed him

to the river, and made his way back to the palace. Now it so chanced that just at the entrance he met with the royal hunchback himself, returning doubtless from some mischievous expedition, and making the best of his way to pay another visit to his beloved princess. The porter had no sooner set his eyes upon him than he exclaimed in the utmost indignation, "Ah! villain hunchback! are you here before me again?" and seizing him with all the glorious strength of a porter by the beard, he bound him in a moment quite fast, and thrusting him into the sack, he said, "Three times you have made me return, and yet you are at it again, but we shall see who has the best of it." In this way he carried the royal hunchback along, who in vain asserted his title to majesty, and that he was just going on a visit to his queen, and endeavoured to bribe his treacherous subject at any price. It was all in vain: he was thrown headlong into the river, while the porter proceeded back, not without some apprehension that he should have another journey. On mounting the staircase, however, and proceeding into the chamber, he had the satisfaction of beholding his labours completed, for no more hunchbacks were to be seen. "Yes, you have done," said the princess; "I do not think he will come back any more now. Here, take all these ducats, and fare you well!" The porter replied, "But he has returned a good many times, though; for I met him just now coming in at the gate; so I bound him fast and put him into the sack in spite of him, and then threw him again into the river. To be sure, he offered me a deal of money to let him go, and threatened and swore, and said he was the king; but it was all of no use: he was obliged to be drowned. So I think I have earned my wages well by four such journeys as these."

Upon hearing these tidings, the princess and her maids of honour were quite overjoyed; and lavishing the most liberal favours upon the porter for his lucky blunder, they bribed him to keep the matter secret. Thus by a single blunder the porter became a rich man, the lady was freed from an ugly brute of a husband, and the Duke of Milesi made happy in possessing the charms of the beautiful princess. Let the fate of the royal hunchback be a lesson, then, for those who are inclined, by fraudulent means, to advance themselves at the expense of others.

NOVELLA V.

In old times, at least some ninety years ago, there lived a certain shopkeeper named Girolamo Linaiuolo, who was remarkable for some green beauty-spots upon his visage. His shop was situated exactly opposite to that of mine host of the "Bell," a favourite resort of travellers, one of whom, crossing the way, addressed him one day as follows: "Surely I saw you hanged the other day at Milan. How have you contrived to rise again from the dead?" But Girolamo denied that he had ever been hanged, and that there was any resurrection in the case. "Don't tell me so," returned the other, "for I saw you stretched out upon your

bier, and I counted exactly the same number of marks upon your face, just sixteen, as you have now. The priests were singing *In die illâ tremendâ;* and, moreover, I tell you that you have had two wives; you have such and such marks on your arm and on your side; and your second wife, who told us so, is now married again to Ambrogio da Porta Comasina, my own servant. What think you of that? Do you think I should say so much if it were not true?" At these words Girolamo turned very pale, exclaiming, "Alas! what did I die of then? I was never hanged." "Well, if you do not like to call it so, I am sure you died very suddenly; thousands can bear witness to that, and you ought still to be dead; take a looking-glass, look at yourself, and you will find how it is." Trembling in every limb, the poor shopkeeper stole a hasty glance at the glass, and beholding himself looking so like a corspe, without further disputing the truth of what was said, he wrapped his mantle about him, and, drawing his hat over his eyes, made the best of his way towards Cestello, where he had a house. By the way he tried to console himself, saying, "At all events, there will be no more trouble in this world for me; no more 'Buy, buy, please to buy!' 'Sell, sell!' 'Please to try this, signor,' and, 'Run, you rascal boy, with these to the gentleman!' No, my shop must be shut up; there is an end of all this now" So, convinced that he had departed this life long ago, as it had been so clearly demonstrated by the traveller, he immediately pulled his clothes off and laid himself out the moment he reached home. Placed in his winding-sheet upon a large table, with a taper burning, and a cross at his head, with two more blessed lights, which he had borrowed for the purpose, burning at his feet, he patiently awaited his interment His wife coming in, and seeing him thus ready prepared for his funeral, far from showing the least inclination to disturb him, sounded the alarm, and affected to weep over her dear husband's death. Of course no one pretended to dispute it, and it was determined that our hero should be interred in all due form. Fortunately, however, two of his friends had witnessed his interview with the traveller, of whom one agreed to take the care of his shop, while the other followed him to observe the result. Finding he was so intent upon being buried, they resolved to humour him, and prepared him a vault in San Lorenzo, where they actually interred him. But, at the same time, they had the kindness to furnish it also with a table of provisions, and two other persons were interred alive to keep him company and take care of him. After enjoying a good sleep, our hero opened his eyes in his new abode and saw a table full of refreshments, with two guests seated there enjoying themselves Gazing round him some time, as he lay there in a state of suspense, he at length began to feel extremely hungry, and addressing himself to the guests, said, "Do the dead eat, then?" They replied, "Yes, indeed they do, signor!" Upon which Girolamo immediately rose and joined them, doing ample justice to the good things he found there. "What shall we do next?" he inquired, when they had concluded their feast "Why, I think we had better go home," replied one of the others; "let us think of looking after our business according to the Lord's commandment; for

those who will not work shall not eat, you know." "Blessed be the name of the Lord!" cried Girolamo; "if I can only contrive to accomplish my resurrection for the second time, I shall be truly delighted." "Come, then," said the other, "I daresay it may be done, if you will lend a hand here;" and so saying, all the three put their shoulders to the task, and at last removing the covering of the vault, they walked quietly home together. But though our hero afterwards committed a thousand follies and extravagances, to the no small entertainment of the neighbourhood, he had never again the good luck to rise from the dead. The next time of his disappearance, which was caused by a cruel malady, he was no longer so fortunate. It was by far the most serious decease of the three, and having already continued about ninety years, he may possibly during that time have got the megrims out of his brain.

NOVELLA VI.

INSCRIBED TO MESSER TIBERIO PANDOLFO.

IN truth, my dear Messer Tiberio, I have been almost obliged to have a new pair of braces made for me, so outrageously have I laughed at a certain magnifico, by name Benetto da Francolino, generally speaking, a kind of friend of ours. Tell me whether I had not reason, as soon as you have perused the following notorious instance of his folly, one which the king of the fools himself might adopt as the future model of all his proceedings? Yet I cannot afford to begin at the beginning of his foolery, or to tell you how he succeeded to his hereditary nonsense; how he boasts his nobility to the winds for want of other listeners; how he keeps a journal and ledger of the miraculous things he does every day; and last, but not least, how he glories in vaunting himself above all the other lords of the creation.

A certain legate of his Holiness in Venice was in the habit of familiar intercourse with this windy patrician, for the very sufficient reason that he had, a long time ago, been enlisted in the service of his most reverend patrons at Rome. Now, *in illo tempore*, about the same time, I say, came his very Holiness himself to hold a papal interview with the Duke of Ferrara in the noble state of Lombardy. His residence was engaged for him, the houses were marked with chalk, and all the monasteries of the city were almost bursting with pious people, who, longing to have a sight of the Pope, like good children, put everything in order at a few days' warning, to receive their holy father. The good legate had not intended to be present at this solemn proceeding, but somehow a whim took him, when he heard of the Duke's grand preparations to receive his master, to have a servant's share in them. Besides, he was always on the look out for occasions in which to do honour to the Holy See and to his friends and patrons, for his faith in whom "he was always ready to give a reason." In this humour, he observed to his friend Benetto, "Now, if I thought I could obtain any lodging in Ferrara, I would

instantly spur away, and arrive in time to make my solemn entry along with his Holiness." "Would you so?" cried his vainglorious companion; "why did not you mention this before? for I do assure you, most reverend father in God, I have a palace there which is quite at your service." "Indeed," returned the legate; "I had no idea of that; but, such being the case, I shall consider myself extremely fortunate." "Then I hope," said this prince of liars, "that your Excellency will not scruple to honour my palace with your presence, for there is only one gentleman who has now apartments in it; but I have expressly reserved for my own use the rooms on the ground floor. You will also find, I trust, a good sample of wine, which I beg you will not spare." "But perhaps," said the legate, "your lodger may be some distinguished prelate—some friend of yours, who may be occupying the whole suite of rooms" Our magnificent boaster, with an air of well-affected surprise, answered, "He dare as soon eat his fingers off as occupy a square foot of deal board without my permission, for I assure you were he to come into my rooms below, I should very quickly eject him out of those above stairs, and he knows that well."

Now who would have believed that a Pope's legate could be so far deceived by his supreme effrontery of face as to give credit to this boasting beast of an impostor? Yet such was the fact; for he made preparations to set out, packing up his pious paraphernalia, hiring his gondolas for his domestics, and then setting off post at great expense and inconvenience to Francolino, and thence proceeding by forced stages, they shortly arrived at Ferrara. During the way the legate's false friend had kept up a continued volley of flattery and folly, declaring that it appeared to him a thousand years until he had the pleasure of beholding a Pope's nuncio in his palace and of honouring him to the utmost stretch of his great authority in Ferrara. In return the legate thanked him, promising to find an occasion to show his gratitude. So far, however, from possessing a palace, this vile Benedetto Franchini was not even worth a common stall in Ferrara, commanding just as much property and influence there as I do myself. He had, however, contrived to worm himself into the favour of a gentleman, whose son, a young man of about thirty, having acquired great influence over him, had the full command of his father's house in town, the identical palace fixed upon by our hero. On this occasion the young gentleman had been at the trouble of furnishing it in the best style for the reception of some Venetian ladies and their friends, whose arrival he was expecting with the utmost joy and ardour. Four of his servants were in waiting on the lower floor, prepared to receive his visitors, while he himself went to take a ride in the city. The domestics were accordingly on the watch, as good servants ought to be, on the tiptoe of expectation. When, hark the sound of wheels! a grand equipage stopped at the door, and out stepped our two gentlemen, assisted by their retinue, from their carriage; but, to the surprise and disappointment of our lacqueys, always a gallant race of men, they were accompanied by no ladies. What could be the meaning of this? Fortune, however, too soon unravelled the mystery, to the confusion of our unlucky and vainglorious hero. She availed herself of this occasion

to proclaim him the king of fools, as far as his name and exploits extended. But, in the meantime, he advanced to welcome his reverend friend on arriving at his palace, inquiring what he thought of it, whether the rooms were such as he liked, and suited to his convenience? "Truly it is a noble palace!" exclaimed the legate, as he paced the magnificent suite of rooms, "and I thank you." "Such as it is," returned his false host, "it is quite at your Excellency's service; only take the trouble of ordering everything just as if you were in your own house." Then proceeding towards the door to watch the arrival of the real master, he said within himself, "Now, what shall I say when this troublesome fellow comes? I will tell him it is by the Duke's express orders that we have taken possession here, and that he must seek out other lodgings as long as the festival lasts Yes, I think that will do!" Just as he had resolved upon this modest proposal, about the hour of supper, there came riding up the young lord of the mansion, who, the moment he saw the equipages at the door, with a lover's eagerness gave spurs to his horse, wondering how the ladies could have escaped him, and thinking every moment an age until he had saluted his love. He threw himself from his horse, and bounded at a single step into the house, when, instead of the fair girl, he encountered our hero on the threshold, who with the utmost effrontery offered him his hand, saying, "How rejoiced I am to see you here! I am a particular friend of your father's, who is under some obligation to me. I have, therefore, made free to bring hither the Pope's ambassador at Venice, a very distinguished prelate, whose patronage you may thus enjoy. I have only, however, put him into possession of these four apartments on the lower floor for a few days; and if you please I will assist you in finding another abode, while we inform your intended guests that we act by the Duke's orders, and whatever are his Excellency's commands we must take them patiently."

On hearing this presumptuous blockhead's demands, the young lover, greatly shocked at his disappointment, had yet sufficient sense to see through the trick, and resolved rather to perish than to break his engagement to the friends of his beloved. Had it even been the Pope or the Emperor, he could not have controlled his passion, as he exclaimed, "Away, thou villain, rogue, impostor, beast as thou art! Tell me not of the Pope or the Pope's ambassador; the house is mine, sir; these apartments are intended for two young ladies and other noble Venetians, and for no one else; so quick, begone, you wretch! Go, or be kicked out, whichever you like best." Hearing high words, the legate made his appearance, dreading lest anything might happen to his honourable friend and worthy host, Franchino, and he was followed by all the domestics. As soon as our young lover set his eyes upon the good bishop in his canonicals, he addressed him as follows. "I am concerned that your lordship should have been made the dupe of this worthless fellow's base and cowardly imposture, in thus bringing you to a stranger's residence. But this mansion is my father's, and has already been offered to a number of Venetian ladies and gentlemen, whom I am every moment expecting to see. Had I been aware, however, of the honour intended me, there is no one I should

have been more proud to accommodate than yourself, and I trust you will consent to remain here for the evening. But not so this prince of impostors, for he must decamp; and I will take upon me to provide your Excellency with a suitable residence to-morrow."

The illustrious prelate endeavoured to express how greatly he was shocked at what had occurred, but was hardly able to open his mouth, so much had he been taken by surprise. "Pardon me, my dear young signor; upon my word, it is the most unlucky, the strangest thing I ever knew, and I do assure you, young man, as I value his Holiness's blessing, that I should not have stirred out of Venice, much less have got into such a dreadful bustle as there is in Ferrara, had not this child of Satan assured me before he set out that the palace was his own, and that everything was at my disposal. But truly I will find my way back again to-night, before you shall have the least trouble on my account," and saying this, he turned round very fiercely upon his deceitful friend, who, in dread of receiving his immediate malediction, took to his heels and disappeared.

The young lover being as good as his word, and wishing to get his Holiness's nuncio quietly out of the way, went and took some rooms for him in a neighbouring convent, where he was duly received and honoured by the whole fraternity. From this incident the good bishop and the young lover were led into a very agreeable acquaintance, which they owed entirely to the absurd impertinence of the eminent ass who had brought them together, and whom they resolved to seize an occasion of requiting, in such a way as to give him no inclination to repeat similar experiments. It is pleasant to see a conceited blockhead thus taken in his own snares, and I have always a singular satisfaction in putting him upon record, by way of amusement as well as example.

NOVELLA XI.

I WAS acquainted, not very long ago, with two cavaliers who, as sometimes will happen, had imbibed the bitterest enmity to each other, but whose names I do not think it prudent here to disclose It will be enough to state that the one was of a noble and fearless character, and the other of as vile and treacherous a disposition. Conceiving himself injured by the former, yet not venturing to challenge him to single combat, or to clear up his honour face to face, the coward employed himself in devising some other means of revenging the slight he imagined he had received. Having been frequently foiled and worsted in the joust, where his adversary had greatly distinguished himself, as well as in many engagements in which he had vanquished his enemies hand to hand, and entitled himself to rank among the heroes of his time, his cowardly foe, jealous of his fame, let no occasion escape of attempting to carry him off by treachery. Though aware of the inveterate malice entertained against him, his more noble-minded enemy, scorning to notice it, refused to take any precautions to ward off the

danger, believing that if he really felt himself aggrieved, he would adopt the usual course of inviting him into the open field. In this supposition he held himself on the alert, well furnished with horse and arms, and resolved to evince the same valour which he had shown on former occasions.

But the consequences to himself were infinitely more fatal than he could have apprehended; for his unworthy opponent, learning that he was about to take a journey from Rome to Naples, had the baseness, impelled by jealousy and revenge, to lie in wait for him, accompanied by forty or fifty ruffians, in a solitary part of the road. There, when the brave cavalier made his appearance, accompanied only by a few friends and attendants, he suddenly found himself surrounded by a band of armed banditti, led by his enemy, to whom he immediately addressed himself with the confidence of one who was incapable of suspecting the meditated treachery, while his followers, alarmed at the disproportionate numbers, drew in their horses' heads, awaiting with anxiety the result. The false traitor riding up to his brave enemy, called upon him to yield or that he was a dead man; to which he replied by clapping his hand upon his sword, but he was soon overpowered by numbers and disarmed. "You are now in my power," exclaimed his exulting and cowardly foe, "and if you do not here consent to what I shall propose, I will despatch you upon the spot along with all your friends. But if you accede to my proposal, you shall all go free." "Let me hear what it is you require," said the other. "It is this: that you subscribe this paper with your own hand; nothing more," said the villain, "I assure you." Now the writing was to the following tenor: "I do hereby certify and make known, of my own free and uninfluenced will, that all the feats of arms which I have hitherto achieved, whether in jousts and tournaments, single battle, or in the field, were performed by aid of diabolical arts and enchantments, and in no way by my own valour. No one need be surprised at this who reflects upon the thousand infernal acts daily brought about at the instigation of the devil. I do, moreover, here make confession, that I am a most disloyal traitor, a heretic, and an atheist; in proof whereof I do under my own hand, and in the presence of the following witnesses, subscribe my name to the above true and faithful declaration."

To this vile forgery the unhappy cavalier, as well to save the lives of his friends as his own, was induced in a fatal moment to subscribe his name, in the belief that the vengeance of his implacable foe would thus be satisfied. For could he have believed it possible that further treachery was intended against him, he would have died, along with his friends, a thousand deaths, sooner than have consented to such an act of dishonour, without the hope of ever clearing his fame. But the moment this unmanly villain had obtained the signature of his name, turning towards the unfortunate gentleman, he said: "It would not have half satiated my vengeance to have deprived you of your life, for I have long hated you, and I have now succeeded in robbing you of your life, your honour, and your soul itself." Then, while offering up the most piteous prayers for mercy, he basely assassinated the

wretched cavalier upon the spot; and, glutted with vengeance and blood, afterwards permitted the rest of the party to retire uninjured, who were the means of handing down his infamy to the execrations of the world.

NOVELLA XII.

THERE has lately risen up, in a place on the confines of Lombardy, a new saint, now ready to be added to the calendar. Having abandoned the profession of curing bodies, in which his conscience began to reproach him with having despatched nearly the whole list of his patients to another world, he undertook the more harmless cure of souls, induced by the same motive of enriching himself at the expense of others. For his cloak of religion, then, he assumed a lion's skin, in which he came to Piacenza, entitling his order—THE APOSTOLIC RULE OF THE FOUR EVANGELISTS, IN THE HABIT OF THE FIRST HERMIT, ST. PAUL

This new invention he supported by a thousand other spiritual fabrications of the same kind, studying the most successful impostures of his predecessors, and persuading the good people, like a rogue as he was, to erect him a convent for his new disorder of monks, quite worthy of their great superior, whose creed was principally to lighten the pockets of their congregation and of simple wayfaring travellers, by virtue of the miracles and relics which they exhibited to view.

Thus, in a short time, from a death-dealing doctor he became a little spiritual despot, reconciling it better to his conscience to tyrannise over the minds than to torture the bodies of his patients; until Fortune, who can ill support the sight even of a good man in prosperity, lent him a few such smart kicks in the exercise of his new functions from one who had detected his imposture, as to lead him to conclude he had gone somewhat too far, though he found it too late to retrace his steps. In short, after having shorn his flock as close as any shepherd well could, he was himself overreached, exposed, and compelled to take to flight, by some superior master in the same art, whose subtlety exceeded even his own. For though he fought hard to maintain his spiritual government and again to recover his lost ground, it was all in vain; no new relics, no fresh miracles could avail him; the charm of his reputation was flown, and a still more successful candidate was now elected to the throne.

Under these circumstances he took to an ambulatory mode of warfare, proceeding from monastery to monastery, husbanding his relics and miracles in a most surprising manner, and exhibiting them only as necessity seemed to require. In the course of these his travels, the last and greatest of his impostures is well deserving of record, even among those preserved in the catalogue of San Ciappelletto. It happened that in journeying one day towards Nizza, he was taken seriously unwell; so much so as to be obliged to seek refuge in a neighbouring convent, belonging to the friars of I know not what dis-

order, where he was glad to be able to repose. Here, as long as he had money enough to make himself comfortable, his residence was highly agreeable to the holy fathers, although the fame of his wicked impostures had reached the place before him; but the moment his resources began to fail, there was a marked change for the worse in their conduct towards our San Giovanni. Their whispers became louder, they began to consult the reputation of their monastery, and the patient could scarcely rest in his bed for their importunities to get rid of him and to send him to the hospital; for as to themselves, they declared that they were heartily tired of him. In this way they went on day after day, worse and worse, as well as the patient, who by his condition seemed resolved to have the benefit of dying in their hands. There was, indeed, only about another hour's life in him, when they came to the resolution of removing him; upon which, in order better to defeat their plan, he died in half an hour, congratulating himself that he had thus succeeded in laying his bones with them, like a pious monk, even against their will. The whole fraternity, not a little perplexed how to act, and desirous of obviating the scandal which might attach to them of having received so notorious a delinquent under their protection, resolved to put the best face they could upon the matter, to give him all due funereal honours in a public and pompous display, to pronounce an oration, and clear his memory from the vile imputations cast upon it, and if all this proved not enough to absolve them in the eyes of the people, to canonise him by the name of "San Giovanni the younger" without delay. For this purpose, the most specious and oratorical monk of the brotherhood was fixed upon to deliver the oration, who went through the whole service with so much credit both to himself and to the deceased saint, that the people, not satisfied with giving mere empty applauses, immediately began a collection beyond expectation of the most sanguine of the order. Our hero, then, was unanimously made a saint in a style that would have excited the envy of his predecessor, San Ciappelletto, and proceeded to work various miracles accordingly. But for my own part, I do not give the least faith to these saints who excite the wonder and applause of the vulgar, confining it only to such as are duly approved and beatified by the Holy Church of the faithful at Rome.

NOVELLA XIV.

TWO knights of Portugal, both of whom are probably still in existence, entertaining a mortal enmity towards each other, were incessantly occupied in studying the surest means of taking revenge. The one, however, who first conceived himself injured surpassed his adversary in the vigilance with which he watched every occasion of carrying his designs into execution. This ferocious disposition was further nurtured by the circumstance of his inability either in force or courage successfully to contend with his enemy, which, while it compelled him to stifle the expression of his hatred, led him to reflect upon every secret method

of annoying him in his power. Though formerly of noble and virtuous dispositions, this unhappy feud had so far disordered his better feelings and his judgment as to induce him to commit one of the most atrocious actions recorded in history. He watched his opportunity of surprising and assassinating both the father and brother of his nobler foe, intelligence of which fact having reached the court, a proclamation was forthwith issued by the king, forbidding his subjects, under the severest penalties, to harbour the author of so foul a crime, while officers were despatched on all sides in pursuit of him.

After perpetrating the deed, the assassin hearing the proclamation everywhere bruited in his ears, and believing it impossible long to elude the vigilance of his pursuers, torn at the same time by the agonies of remorse and guilt, came to a resolution rather of dying by the hand of him whom he had so deeply injured than awaiting the more tardy and ignominious course of justice. For, having satiated his revenge, the idea of what he had once been and of his lost fame and honour, rushed with an overwhelming sense of despair across his mind, and he felt a dark and fearful satisfaction in yielding himself up to the sword of his deeply injured adversary. With this view he secretly issued from his retreat under cover of the night, and having before daybreak reached the residence of him whom he deemed his executioner, he presented himself in his astonished presence with the fatal poniard in his hand, kneeling and baring his bosom as he offered it to the grasp of his foe.

Impelled by a sudden feeling of revenge, and viewing the assassin in his power, the cavalier was in the act of plunging the steel into his breast, but restraining his passion, and conceiving it dishonourable to take so inglorious an advantage, he flung it from him and turned his face away At length commanding his emotion, he declared that he would never stain his hands with the blood of a defenceless man, much less of an unarmed knight, be his offences what they would; and with singular greatness and generosity of soul proceeded to assure the assassin of his safety as long as he remained with him. Witnessing the terrors of remorse and guilt which seemed to sting him to the quick, and leaving his further punishment to Heaven, his generous foe attended him the ensuing night on horseback beyond the confines of the kingdom. Yet, on his return, unable to forget the sad source of his resentment, he hastened to the court of Portugal, and on obtaining an audience of his majesty, said that he had heard of his enemy's escape from the country, and that he was now probably beyond the reach of justice, glorying in his iniquity It was therefore incumbent upon him to adopt some other means of redressing the wrongs he had suffered, and his majesty would oblige him by granting a safe-conduct to his foe to re-enter the kingdom, so that he might meet him in single battle. "There is only one condition," continued the knight, "I would beseech your majesty to grant; that if I should be so unfortunate as to fall beneath his arm, your majesty will please to absolve him from all his offences, and permit him to go free, and if, as I firmly trust, I should come off victorious, that his fate shall rest in my hands" The king with some difficulty being prevailed upon to grant these terms, the noble cavalier immediately despatched messengers bearing at once

a safe-conduct and a public defiance to his enemy to meet him in the field and yield him satisfaction in single combat, according to the laws of honour, before the king and court. Willing to afford his enemy the revenge he sought, the assassin, to the astonishment of the people, made his appearance on the appointed day in the lists, clothed in complete armour, and accepted the challenge proposed. On the heralds sounding a charge, they both engaged with apparently equal fury, but the injured knight shortly wounded his antagonist severely in several places, and stretched him on the field weltering in his blood. Instead, however, of despatching him, as every one expected, on the spot, he raised him up, and calling for surgical assistance, had him conveyed to a place of safety. His wounds proving not to be mortal, the noble cavalier on his recovery accompanied him into the presence of the king, and declared publicly before the whole court that he granted him his liberty and his life, entreating at the same time the royal pardon for him, and permission to reside in any part of his majesty's dominions.

In admiration of his unequalled magnanimity, the king readily conceded what he wished; while the unhappy object of their favour, overwhelmed with feelings of remorse and shame, humbled himself before his generous conqueror, and ever afterwards evinced sentiments of the utmost gratitude and respect to the noble cavalier, being at once the most faithful friend and follower he ever had.

NOVELLA XXII.

THERE was a certain Greek gentleman, who, with immense wealth, possessed an extremely sociable disposition, which latter quality, however, did not prevent his entertaining great aversion for every kind of scandal and buffoonery. During the summer season he usually kept open house, and invited all the most estimable characters he could meet with in the vicinity to dine with him. Now it so happened, that having occasion one day to give a splendid feast in his suite of lower rooms, there was introduced to his table among others a notorious wit and buffoon of the very stamp to which he had taken such an antipathy Even before dinner was announced he began to broach his budget of news and lies and wicked witticisms, in which he was encouraged by the applause of too many of the guests. Perceiving the low turn the conversation was taking, the shrewd and accomplished host, catching his eye, affected at first to take his tricks and witticisms all in good part, observing, "How I love a humorous man! you are heartily welcome, signor; it is an age since I have met with your equal. If I thought that exalting you to the head of the table could add the least jot to your humour, by Jove! you should do the honours of the house for me." Then pointing to the grand repast that lay spread out before them, he insisted upon his first tasting a precious kind of wine before sitting down to table, adding with a gay and joyous aspect, "You know it has ever been our custom, gentlemen, previous to arrang-

ing our places here, to take precedence according to our respective agility. First of all, we must try which can leap the highest over a handkerchief; secondly, which can jump the furthest, making three essays each. Whoever leaps the highest let him have the second place; but whoever jumps the furthest, surely he will be entitled to the first. Now let me try whether I cannot still preserve my place at the head of my own table;" and bounding up three times to a prodigious height, our alert Greek made the rest of the company almost despair. He begged the buffoon, by way of compliment, to follow him next, and then the other guests, but their efforts to equal him were vain. "Now then," cried the Count, "we shall see who will have the first place;" and, taking a start, he made a most astonishing hop, skip, and a jump the length of the whole room. In fact he went half-way through the door, while murmurs of applause followed the exploit. Our witty gentleman, intent upon rivalling the Count and securing the first place at table, summoned all his strength, and with the third leap succeeded in beating his adversary by at least two feet. When the wily Greek saw that he had jumped himself fairly out of the door, he instantly turned the key upon him, shutting in the other guests and himself, and cried out in a triumphant tone. "Go, for you are beneath our notice! beaten hollow, all to nothing! Let us sit down!" a proposal to which the other guests unanimously assented The wit then for the first time in his life, perhaps, perceived that he had been outwitted; he heard the torrent of laughter bursting from the room, and sought a dinner for that day elsewhere. The good host observing that they were well rid of such a scandalous, backbiting wretch, who only went about hatching mischief, began to entertain his company like a true gentleman as he was, and for once feasted with closed instead of open doors, a circumstance, however, which seldom occurred. Oh! that others would take example by him, instead of fostering with their smiles a set of half-starved ragamuffin wits and sycophants, who repay such kindness by poisoning the real pleasure and destroying the proprieties of decent and respectable tables, uttering a thousand falsehoods and defamations which not unfrequently end in heart-burnings, duels, and death itself!

NOVELLA XXX.

TWO young courtiers once laid a plot together to carry off a beautiful young girl from her mother's protection, one of whom, having already engaged her affections, succeeded under the most solemn promises of marriage in seducing her from the path of duty. Though of humble origin, she was as intelligent and accomplished as she was beautiful, yet her youth and inexperience united to the pleadings of affection at at length betrayed her to her ruin She nevertheless placed such unbounded confidence in her lover's honour, and such was the ascendency he acquired over her, that she was prevailed upon when the ardour of his love had passed away to resume her former dress, and

consent to return to her mother's home, in the belief that on the appointed day he would come and claim her hand in marriage. In this way she was late one evening borne by these bad friends to her former dwelling, one of them pretending to bind himself for the fulfilment of the other's engagements. They left her a little money, and took their leave of their weeping victim, repeating their false promises of a speedy return.

Here her unhappy situation could not long be concealed from her mother, whose mingled grief and passion on learning the fatal truth were such as only a mother can fully appreciate, but which it is impossible to convey in words. Drowned in tears of anguish, her daughter in vain attempted to inspire her with the hopes she herself felt to excuse the conduct and assert the honourable intentions of her lover. The mother soon saw the full extent of her poor girl's misfortune, the long tissue of premeditated cruelty and deceit to which she had fallen a prey; and the hand which had been suddenly raised as if to strike her to the earth only clasped her neck in the fulness of maternal sorrow and affection. But their unhappiness did not rest here; the tongue of scandal soon became busy with their good name, which had lately ranked among the best and purest, and the mother, goaded with redoubled anguish, now insisted upon their appealing to the Duke Alexander for redress, not the least distinguished among the Medici for his love of justice throughout Florence. With patient attention the Duke listened to her unhappy story, and told her to wipe away her tears, for that, as far as depended upon him, she should no longer have occasion to weep. Then taking her mother aside, he said, "I wish you to be civil to these gentlemen invite them to your house; let your daughter entertain them like other company, and contrive that they shall sup together. Moreover, observe my commands in everything I shall direct, and despair not, for we will secure the future happiness of your daughter. But breathe not a word of what I say to you; if you have the weakness, like most women, to talk of your own affairs, and let my name appear in this, ill betide the fortunes of your family, for you will forfeit my favour and the dowry which it is my intention to bestow upon your daughter, and remain in greater disgrace than before! Be secret, therefore, and let me hear from you on the occasion I have mentioned."

In obedience to the Duke's wishes, the lady put the whole affair into train; and one day as the fair girl sat binding her hair upon the sunny side of a gentle hill, lying beyond her flower-garden, she perceived the two cavaliers approaching her. They saw and accosted her, while her mother received them with cheerful looks at the door, and inviting them in, proceeded to regale them in the best style she could. In the meantime she informed the Duke of their arrival, who, accompanied by a few select officers, directly set off, and joined the lady at her house Soon after alighting, he took occasion to entreat the lady to show him through her mansion. This she was apparently compelled to do; and when they approached the apartment where the party were supping together, she affected to turn his Excellency aside, observing aloud, "There is nothing further worthy of your Excellency's

notice; a mere lumber-room." "But I will see it, nevertheless," interrupted his grace, "I will see it;" and suddenly opening the door, he beheld his two courtiers, with the lovely girl seated between them, enjoying themselves in the best style, and imagining in their conceit that they were now equally acceptable to both the ladies of the house. "Good night, my lords," cried the Duke; "I wish you joy! You seem extremely comfortable here." They both directly rose in the utmost confusion at the sight of the Duke, while the timid girl, unable to contend with her feelings, burst into a flood of tears. "Weep not," said the Duke to her in a gentle voice; "good girls are always to be found at home; they do not run after courtiers to other people's houses; you confer honour upon your household by staying where you are." Though there was a tone of irony in this, followed by some severe yet well-meant reflections and advice, he mingled with them so much gentleness and pity that she thanked him even in her tears He then declared that he had come for the sole purpose of bestowing her hand in marriage, and of conferring on her a dowry of five hundred crowns. Turning next towards one of his first officers, he continued, "Would you deign to accept this gentleman as your husband? Does he please you?" Drooping her fair head, unable for some minutes to reply, she could only at length sob out, "No, no husband but he who promised to take me as his wedded wife" "What!" said the Duke, "are you then already married?" "This, my lord, is the gentleman who gave me his vows and swore to make me his wife." The Duke then turning round upon the courtier, with a noble and determined air, "If this be the truth," he continued, "how happens it that I find the lady in this house, and in company with this other gentleman at table? Wherefore does she not sit at your table? What am I to think of this?" "He is my friend," said the guilty courtier; "he will witness for me." ——but he stammered out only some unmeaning words, and stood covered with confusion as the Duke proceeded "And had you both forgotten that there was yet such a governor as Alexander de' Medici alive? that there was yet justice in the land? Speak, fair lady; which of these gentlemen do you fix upon as your lawful husband?" "No other, so please your Excellency," she replied, "but he who has often promised to make me his" "It is enough," continued the Duke; "what you ask is only just; and to show you that justice is one of the virtues that I love, receive this ring, signor, and espouse the young woman before my eyes. And you," he observed, addressing the courtier's companion, "will be kind enough to add to the lady's dowry the sum of five hundred crowns, the same amount that I have myself given her" Then, having been witness to the marriage, he departed with the whole of his train, including the bridegroom's false friend, leaving the happy young bride and her husband in their mother's house.

Novels of Sebastiano Erizzo.

SEBASTIANO ERIZZO.



THIS writer was a Venetian gentleman and a senator, more distinguished, perhaps, for his antiquarian researches, and as the founder of the present system of studying ancient medals, than for his superior excellence as a novelist. A few stories, however, rather of an historical than an imaginary cast, are to be met with in his work of the "Sei Giornate,"[1] that may possess sufficient attractions for the genuine lovers of fiction. It made its first appearance under the auspices of the once celebrated critic, Lodovico Dolce, to whom the author presented the MS. from which it was put forth at Venice.[2] Sebastiano was born on the 19th of June 1525, and was the son of Antonio Erizzo, a distinguished senator, by a daughter of the Cavaliero Contarini. He pursued his studies in Greek and Roman literature at Padua, and afterwards devoted his whole attention to philosophy, in which, if we are to give credit to Dolce, he made a great proficiency, as his numerous moral tales, which he very properly so called to distinguish them from the class of novelle, sufficiently testify. In his commendations, however, both of their style and character, his friend Dolce would appear to have departed somewhat from his usual path as a critic to enter upon the pleasanter duty of the panegyrist.

He no doubt very conscientiously announces, "that he should be defrauding the reader of much valuable moral improvement, and the author of his just fame, were he to deprive the world of the labours of so learned and distinguished a youth." But whatever allowance we ought to make for the praises bestowed upon a young acquaintance by a critic to whom he presented his work, such is its remaining merit as to induce the translator to present a few specimens of a production which Dolce declares to be "in every point deserving of the very highest applause."

Erizzo bore the reputation of a good poet, as well as of a novelist, antiquary, and philosopher. He was intrusted with many important commissions by his country; sat in the Council of Ten; and died at the age of sixty in Venice. Honourable mention is made of him by Crescimbeni and other literary historians.

[1] Le Sei Giornate di Messer Sebastiano Erizzo, date in luce da Messer Lodovico Dolce, all' Illustrissimo Signore Federico Gonzaga, Marchese di Gazuolo. Venezia, Gio. Varisco e Compagni 1567

[2] Dolce's "Dedicatory Epistle," dated Venice, June 15, 1567.

NOVELLA XXV.

I RECOLLECT having once heard a Spanish gentleman, who had resided some time at the court of Portugal, relate a quarrel which took place there between a master of the king's bed-chamber and one of the other courtiers. The former, whose name was Giovanni, believing himself slighted by his enemy, resolved to let no opportunity escape him of effecting a bitter revenge. And to such a length did his animosity proceed, that, smarting under his imaginary disgrace, he contrived to surprise the other, sword in hand, and assassinate him while walking in open day a few miles out of the city of Lisbon. Having committed the act, he instantly fled beyond the confines of the kingdom, seeking shelter at Vilvao, in Biscay, his native place The king, being greatly grieved to hear of the sudden and unhappy death of a courtier whom he had long esteemed both for his pleasing manners and for his prowess in the field, commanded the strictest inquiries to be instituted. Finding that Giovanni no longer made his appearance, no one hearing tidings of him, and the particulars of the previous quarrel being publicly known, his majesty was at no loss how to account for the assassination, which was soon after indeed ascertained to have been perpetrated by the hand of Giovanni. A heavy price was therefore imposed by royal order upon the criminal's head, as a reward to whomsoever would deliver him up, either dead or alive, into the hands of justice.

Now as soon as Don Pietro, steward of the royal household, heard the tenor of the proclamation, though he had formerly been greatly indebted, and even owed his life, to Giovanni, who had cleared him from some unjust accusations for which he would otherwise have suffered, yet, unmindful of all the past kindness and obligations which he had received, and instigated by the amount of the reward, he was ungenerous enough to use every means of discovering his former friend's retreat. Accidentally hearing from an acquaintance travelling from Biscay that Giovanni had there sought refuge, he carefully concealed these tidings from the rest of the court, but took occasion, in an audience with the king, to acquaint him that he had at length discovered the place of his retreat; intimating that it would not be long before he should present his majesty with the criminal's head. After receiving, therefore, full assurance of the promised reward, Pietro, being well armed and mounted, departed the next morning with all speed towards Biscay, and arriving within a few days at Vilvao, he secretly proceeded to discover traces of Giovanni. When he had succeeded in this object, he next took some apartments near his residence, where he determined to await a favourable occasion of carrying his nefarious project into execution Unhappily for the object of his treachery, this was too soon afforded, Giovanni being engaged to go as far as the port of San Sebastian, where he was to await the arrival of one of his brothers returning from a long voyage. The insidious Pietro observed the preparations for his departure, and suspecting that he was about to leave the city, resolved to keep him company the

better to effect his design. Watching the hour when he set out, shortly afterwards the traitor himself secretly took horse, and following some part of the way at a convenient distance, he at length perceived him approaching the foot of a high mountain. In a few moments he was at his side, and turning suddenly upon him, he seized the reins of Giovanni's horse, accosting him at the same time with a fierce and threatening aspect: "Stand, villain, traitor as thou art, and yield me, as in spite of thee thou shalt, thy coward life! Lo! thou art taken in the same snares which thou didst most maliciously and traitorously prepare for one of the noblest knights of Portugal; but thou shalt no longer live to boast thee of that vile and savage deed!" The wretched Giovanni hearing these words, while he recognised the features of his friend Pietro, with trembling and conscience-smitten voice thus replied: "I know not, O Pietro, whether I ought to yield credit to my senses, and whether it can be really you whom I see before me, whose voice I hear and whose hand I thus clasp in mine. An unhappy man am I if you be no longer the same friend whom I once knew at the court of our monarch! Do I say friend? Nay, my most dear and intimate companion, in whose love and honour I ever reposed the utmost trust; and more yet, whose very life I saved from the malice of enemies and the indignation of the king. Is it, then, with such a countenance, with such words—nay, look not thus fiercely on me—that you repay all the favours I conferred upon you? Say, did you not once promise in the fulness of your heart, grateful for the life you had received, to watch ever faithfully and fondly over mine? Could I even have dreamed that I had need to guard my bosom from the secret dagger of one who, indebted to me for his life, had sworn to shield me from every harm? When did I in thought or word since that time offend you, that I should receive so bitter a recompense for all my love? I know not, unless you resent my having rescued you from an ignominious death. Yet common humanity, to say nothing of reason and gratitude, should lead you to take compassion on me, on my young wife and infant boy, and not to think of depriving them of their only protector in so savage a way. If you have a father, Pietro, then think of mine, whose sole support I am: he is bent down with grief and age; come with me, and restore me to him: let him not live to hear that you have cut me off in the summer of my days. Besides, I am going far, very far, to see one of my brothers, whom I had long wept as dead. He is but just arrived, and you will not refuse to let me behold him before I die. Nay, do not strike me. I am unarmed; but put yourself for a moment in my place, and then act as you would yourself be treated. Grant but my life, and my whole fortune shall be at your disposal. What gain, what triumph can be yours, to slay me thus unarmed? You say it was thus I slew my enemy; but he was not my friend, and by repeated insults he provoked his fate. He too would have done the like by me, had not just Heaven disposed it otherwise, and favoured the righteous cause. Venture not, therefore, to imbrue your hands in innocent blood,—nay, worse, in the blood of your friend and benefactor, drawing down upon yourself the malediction of Heaven and of mankind." Here he ceased; but the savage and avaricious

Pietro, deaf to all his entreaties and to his last prayers for mercy, as if he took pleasure in prolonging his torment, having seized him by the throat, slowly raised his weapon, and proceeded to execute his ferocious purpose. Striking him a violent blow upon the neck, he half severed his head from his body, and repeating his strokes with the utmost fury on various parts of his person, he soon laid the unhappy Giovanni dead at his feet. With the same unrelenting ferocity he then separated the head from the yet warm and reeking corpse; and bearing it along with him, he hastened from that wild and terrific scene with the feelings rather of a demon than of a man. Insensible as yet to the retributive pangs that awaited him, he took his dark and solitary way back to the Portuguese capital, accompanied only by the bloody witness of his crime, over lonely plain, valley, and mountain, heedless alike of the smiles or frowns of Nature, and of the sleeping vengeance of the heavens above him. He did not scruple to present the head of his friend at court, claiming the reward due for the death of a criminal, whom he boasted to have slain with his own hand. Nor did he for a long period seem at all troubled with the recollection of so foul an offence, though, doubtless, however slow, his punishment would be no less sure, either here or hereafter. For it is almost impossible, indeed, to estimate the iniquity of an action which, added to its cold-blooded ferocity, involved such an extent of enormous and unexpected ingratitude.

NOVELLA XXXV.

AT the period when the tyrant Nicocles swayed the sceptre of Sicyon, alike feared and hated by its citizens, two only were found who, equally distinguished by their rank, their wealth, and their spirit, disdained longer to bear the intolerable weight of his oppression Surpassing their fellow-citizens as well in courage as in rank, they were the first to conspire together how they might best achieve the freedom of their native place, though even by the death of its despotic ruler, aware that the seeds of liberty are best watered with the blood of its enemies. With this view, having fixed upon a certain hour and spot, they waited with much anxiety for the period of its accomplishment, but, seized with a sudden panic when the moment arrived, one of the two conspirators refused to proceed any further in the affair. Not satisfied with this, and afraid of being anticipated by his colleague, he went instantly to the palace of the tyrant, and the better to ingratiate himself, acquainted him with the whole transaction, affecting at the same time to have given ear to it only with a view of revealing the real author to the king, as was the duty of every loyal subject. Having in this manner been made acquainted with the full particulars of the conspiracy, Nicocles, giving entire credit to the account, despatched forthwith a company of his guards to the residence of Timocrates, with orders to level the gates with the ground and to bear the traitor alive into his presence.

The noble citizen was in this way seized and carried before the tyrant, who, having feasted his eyes with the sight of his victim, and thrown him into one of his most horrid dungeons, condemned him on the very same day to die. But as it was the custom of those times that such as were found guilty of capital crimes should be executed during the night within the walls of their dungeon, when their cries could not be heard, Timocrates was thus condemned to suffer on the following evening. When tidings of this terrific punishment came to the ears of his poor consort, Arsinoe, who was most tenderly attached to her husband, so great was her surprise and terror as well-nigh to deprive her of existence. On recovering sufficiently to dwell upon the dreadful subject, she long revolved every means that her affection could suggest of averting so heavy and unexpected a calamity. She well knew how worse than unavailing it would be to pour her prayers and tears at the feet of the tyrant, a measure that might crown their sufferings by bringing along with it the dishonour as well as the death of her husband. She resolved, then, to think and to act only for herself; and it was not long before her ingenuity supplied her with an idea, which with fearless breast she prepared to carry into speedy effect. On the evening that her consort was to suffer, no sooner was it twilight, than, wrapping herself in a dark cloak and veiling her beauty in deep black crape, she took her fearful and solitary way, without acquainting a single friend with her purpose, towards the dungeon prepared for the tomb of all she held most dear. On her arrival, taking aside one of the guards, she besought him, bitterly weeping while she spoke, to permit her to see her husband for a few moments before he died, and to yield her the sad consolation of a last tear, a last embrace, without which they should neither of them die in peace. Touched at her deep and passionate distress, the rest of the guards gathered round her, and unable long to resist her entreaties, they all of them, catching the soft infection from each other, at length agreed to let her pass.

On beholding her husband, however, instead of longer giving way to womanly lamentations and tears, Arsinoe assumed all the fortitude of a heroine, boldly yet sweetly advising and consoling him, while she entreated him no longer to despair. Then, hastily acquainting him with her plan, she began to array him in her own dress, and having disguised his face in the thick veil, and thrown the cloak over his shoulders, she took one kiss, breathed a soft farewell, and quietly assumed his place. The guards, believing that it was the lady returning apparently drowned in grief, offered no sort of opposition; and in a little while Timocrates was beyond the limits of the tyrant's sway. But the hour was come when the executioner proceeded with the guards to receive his victim from their hands, bearing along with him the infernal implements of his trade. What was their surprise, on approaching nearer, to lay their unhallowed hands upon a gentle and beauteous lady, who was immediately borne by the executioner into the tyrant's presence, to learn in what way he was to proceed. Here she was received with scowling and terrific looks, while she appeared wholly unable to answer the threats and inquiries of the incensed prince. Vainly attempting to hide her terror, she again and again

burst into tears whenever she prepared to speak, so as even to awaken some touch of compassion in the tyrant's obdurate breast. "Be not so much alarmed, lady," he continued in an altered tone: "what is it you fear? Only reveal the real motives which led you to set my power at defiance, to rescue my prisoner, a traitor doomed to death, and to deceive my guards" "Neither," replied Arsinoe, "was it to defy your power nor to deceive your officers, it was love, only love and pity for my unhappy husband that impelled me to it; and I would hazard much, much more, even more than life itself, did I possess it, for his sake. When the fearful tidings burst upon me, when I heard that he was condemned to suffer an ignominious death, and when I reflected upon his whole life and conduct, nor found the slightest cause for blame or for your princely displeasure, I was determined to peril everything for his rescue. This I have done, and succeeded; and I willingly yield me a victim, if such I must be, in his place. Yet I would still hope that you will not behold my affliction and my tears unmoved; but attribute all my error and my crime to the tender love I bore him, a love which grew up with our earliest years, and which is such that you must tear away my heart-strings before I can quietly see him perish. Surely, then, you cannot pretend to exercise any law against true and devoted affection · severe as you are esteemed to be, you would not punish me for feelings over which I have no control."

Such was the affecting appeal of the wretched Arsinoe, which produced so extraordinary an effect upon the mind of Nicocles, that, cruel and unforgiving as he naturally was, and vehemently exasperated against Timocrates in particular, he yet felt his fury and indignation die away within him at the sound of her mournful words. He therefore admitted her conjugal affection to be a sufficient justification of her conduct, and dismissed her uninjured from his presence. But not so fortunate were the guards, whose humanity was deserving of a better fate. Against them his wrath burned with unmitigated fury. "And now seize me those caitiff villains," cried the tyrant, "who, false to their trust, permitted access to my prisoner. Their blood be upon their own heads, for I will never consent to be thus wholly cheated out of my revenge," and the unhappy guards were accordingly led to execution by the hired mercenaries of the tyrant. In the course of a short time, Arsinoe, having obtained tidings of her husband, disguised herself in male attire, and accompanied by a single faithful servant fled secretly from her house, and joined the object of her love in a distai

Novels of Niccolo Granucci.

NICCOLO GRANUCCI.[1]

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THE family of this novelist, becoming partisans of the Guelph faction, were banished early in the fourteenth century from Lucca. Afterwards, on its restoration, it became very powerful, various branches spreading throughout the different states of Italy. From some circumstances, indeed, connected with the fortunes of his family, Granucci is said to have derived many of his stories, expressly stating in his work, as we learn from Mr. Dunlop,[2] that when on a visit to Sienna in 1568, he availed himself of the occasion to reach the little town of Pienza, in the vicinity, for the purpose of inquiring whether there were any descendants of the family name remaining in those parts. He then goes on to relate that two very respectable citizens bore him company to a monastery in the neighbourhood of Pienza, whence he subsequently proceeded to visit the Villa di Tojano, in company with one of the monks, who relates a variety of stories, and presents him, likewise, on parting, with a MS. which furnished him with the materials from which he compiled his work, and which the author in his preface declares "well merited the title of *Selva di varia lezione*." Though the style of this writer can by no means boast the ease and elegance of some of the earlier novelists, it is, nevertheless, for that age extremely good. For being an avowed imitator and admirer of Boccaccio, he was at the pains of rendering his "Teseide,"[3] from *ottava rima* into prose, a task which fully entitled him, we think, to claim some acquaintance with the taste and purity of that writer's language.

He flourished about the year 1570. His moral work, entitled "La Piacevol Notte e Lieto Giorno," the "Delightful Night and Pleasant Day," made its appearance, with the date of 1574, at Venice.

NOVELLA I.

IN the magnificent city of Ferrara, about the time of Duke Borso, dwelt a noble youth of the name of Polidoro. Becoming deeply attached to one of the most beautiful girls in the whole place, he had

[1] La Piacevol Notte e Lieto Giorno, Opera Morale di Nicolao Granucci di Lucca, indirizzato al molto Magnifico e Nobilissimo Sig. M. Giuseppe Arnolfini, Gentiluomo Lucchese. Venezia, appresso Jacomo Vidali, 8vo, 1574.

[2] History of Fiction, vol. ii. p. 469.

[3] La Teseide di M. Giovanni Boccaccio, &c., di ottava rima nuovamente ridotta in prosa per Nicolao Granucci di Lucca, &c., Lucca, Presso Vincenzo Busdraghi, 1579.

soon the happiness of acquiring such an interest in her affections as to induce her to yield her consent to a speedy union. As she had numerous other suitors, however, of whom Polidoro was extremely jealous, she was persuaded, in order to allay his apprehensions, in the meantime, unknown to her friends and family, to give him frequent meetings, in one of which he prevailed upon her to accept the marriage ring from his hand, as a pledge of his honourable views. Having then taken leave of each other, the promised bride retired to rest; but soon after midnight she was awoke, and imagined she heard some one entering her chamber window. She arose, and beheld by the light of the moon one of the most daring of her rejected lovers, who had already made good his entrance. Having only a single moment to decide how she could best defend her menaced honour, which she was aware she should equally forfeit by giving vent to her cries, she seized a weapon which lay near her and smote the youth so severely on the temples that he immediately fell headlong to the ground, at the very moment when he fancied he was about to succeed in his attempt His cries drawing the officers of justice to the spot, a strict search took place, during which the unfortunate Polidoro, being the only person found near the place, was forthwith seized upon suspicion of having assassinated his rival, and was thrown into the public prison.

Fearful only of casting the least imputation upon the reputation of her he loved, he at once admitted the charge of having perpetrated the deed a supposed crime for which he was adjudged to suffer death. Tidings of the unhappy result of this affair coming, the ensuing day, to the ears of his betrothed bride, she hesitated not an instant in what way to act Heedless of consequences, she set out for the palace of the Duke, where, half wild with grief and terror at the idea of her lover having already suffered, she became clamorous for an audience, the people on all sides making way for her, until she was at length stopped by the officer upon guard at the ducal gates. Her passionate appeals, however, for admittance were here irresistible, and she was conducted in a short time into the audience-chamber before the Duke and his whole court But, regardless of surrounding objects, she singled out him of whom she was in search, and throwing herself at his feet in all the sweet disorder of distressed beauty, which heightened rather than diminished her charms, she besought his clemency and pity in the following terms. "Heaven, that has given me access to your Excellency, will, I fervently trust, incline your heart also to listen to me, to listen to justice and to truth Let not the innocent, my honoured lord, suffer for the guilty. The cause for which I appear before you, however much it may seem to reflect upon myself, will not permit me to be longer silent. Believe me, then, when I say that the prisoner Polidoro and my unhappy self have been long though secretly betrothed to each other, and we were on the eve of becoming united when the deceased youth, for whose death he has been made responsible, urged by envy and disappointment, had the shameless audacity to make attempts upon my honour, by stealing his way into my chamber by night. At the same hour came my betrothed husband, whom I had consented to meet in order to arrange measures of recon-

ciliation with our friends, as well as to obviate the effects of some ungrounded jealousy in regard to the deceased, which had been some time before preying upon his mind. And for this reason only had I consented to unite my fate with his before we had succeeded in obtaining the favourable decision of our friends. We had scarcely taken leave of each other, when, on retiring to rest, I was soon after startled out of my slumbers by hearing the sash of my chamber window open, and beheld with terror the head of the deceased, who had succeeded in scaling the walls, and was about to invade the sanctuary of my rest. Impelled at once by fear and indignation, I snatched the sword that I have long kept near my couch, and struck the invader of my honour with the utmost strength I could command. He fell to the ground, and by the just award of Heaven, rather than by any power of mine, he shortly afterwards expired.

"In the tumult thus caused it was not long before the captain of the band with his followers rushed towards the spot. What was my surprise and horror, then, to hear this very morning that my beloved and innocent Polidoro had been just seized, convicted, and lay under sentence of death, preferring rather to suffer everything than even to betray my name. Deserted, alone, and fearful of confiding the circumstances of our union to any, fearful even of the jealous reproaches of my Polidoro, to whom or whither could I turn for advice and aid—whither, I repeated in my despair, but to the source of honour and justice itself, at the feet of our most noble and righteous Duke?"

Here, no longer able to control her emotions, the lovely Ortensia ceased to speak, but not to weep, until the Duke kindly raising her up and assuring her she had no cause for such excessive sorrow, as far as it lay in his power to remove it, she attempted to recover her composure. "But is he free? is he pardoned?" inquired the anxious girl with breathless haste, almost resisting his efforts to raise her from the ground. "Yes, yes, you are both free," rejoined the Duke with one of his most benevolent and irresistible smiles, "you are both free to be as happy as you please, and as I doubt not you deserve to be, as far as my influence, at least, with both your parents can be supposed to be of any avail. For it is impossible that I should not believe what you say, your words and looks have the stamp of truth impressed upon them; and the only part of the affair, I think, which we have to regret is your surpassing loveliness and worth, which doubtless led to the fatal enterprise of the poor enamoured boy. You have taught others, however, by his fate, fair lady, to keep a more respectful distance; and we are far from wishing to find fault with you for showing the courage of the heroine as well as the affection of the woman. You have our full approbation and respect." But the scene which she had now gone through, and even supported until the Duke ceased to speak, with so much animation and courage, was too affecting to be longer borne; she gazed timidly around the court, and hearing some murmurs of applause as the Duke concluded, aware that the eyes of numbers were upon her, all her womanly feelings, all her sensibility and delicacy, came into sudden play; she grew pale, she trembled, and the next moment fainted in the Duke's arms. "I trust

we have done no mischief here," he continued as he himself bore her, followed by the princesses, into another saloon; "she will recover, and we will all of us yet be present to grace her approaching nuptials." And our noble Duke performed what he had thus promised; for he himself saw and reconciled the rival families: and as he watched the hand of the bright Ortensia conferred upon the happy Polidoro, he observed to one of the courtiers near him, "I think she did well to put the other poor fellow first out of his pain; he could not have borne this."

Novels of Ascanio Mori da Ceno.

ASCANIO MORI DA CENO.[1]



ALTHOUGH an accomplished writer, a soldier, and a scholar, Mori does not stand in the first rank of the novelists of the sixteenth century, subsequent to which period few good writers of Italian fiction have flourished. He was by birth a Mantuan, and spent the greatest part of his life in the service of the princes of the house of Gonzaga. One of the members of this family he accompanied into Hungary, with the view of assisting the Emperor Maximilian against the Turks in his campaigns with the famous Solyman. He next entered into the service of Venice as a volunteer in its wars with the same power. From these circumstances and the dedication of his novels to Vicenzo Gonzaga, Prince of Mantua, we gather that he wrote towards the close of the sixteenth century. He proposed a second series of his stories; but these, as far as can be ascertained, he either never produced or never published. Each novel is introduced with a poetical address to some prince of the houses of Gonzaga or of Medici, in the form of a madrigal or a sonnet; for which, however, he does not seem to have been indebted to the pen of his friend, Torquato Tasso, with whom he is said to have been very intimate An interesting letter, indeed, written by the great poet to the novelist is yet extant, an extract from which is given in Mr. Black's "Life of Tasso" Mori is by no means so voluminous a writer as many of his contemporaries, the number of his stories not exceeding fifteen: these are dedicated to his patron, Vicenzo Gonzaga, the prince who so basely assassinated the Admirable Crichton. The third in the series is a story, to be found in the following selection, of a messenger travelling post with a pardon for a criminal, but stopping to observe the whole process of an execution just as he arrived, he does not deliver his message until all is over. Many of his novels are supposed to consist of real incidents, often very minutely described, with particular allusion to the time and place, though he affects to disguise the names, *per convenienti rispetti*,—for good reasons This he takes care to repeat in several of his historical tales, showing from various little circumstances that he was well acquainted with the parties. Thus in his fourth novel, of Giulio and Lidia, he observes in regard to his heroine, after omitting the place of her residence, *per convenienti rispetti*, that he does not know whether to rank her among the downright plain or the beautiful: but that if all the handsome women were to be banished, she would run

[1] Prima Parte delle Novelle di Ascanio Mori da Ceno. Mantua, Francesco Osanna, 8vo. 1585

very little risk The same might be observed of his eighth novel, and many others, all which, we may add, are distinguished for their humour and for the easiness of their style.

NOVELLA II.

THERE once dwelt in our good city of Mantua a certain Messer Maffeo Strada, an elderly gentleman of very unobjectionable manners and well to do in the world. But though extremely active and vigilant in his affairs, he was not forgetful of his social duties, inasmuch as having lost his own wife and family, he took into his charge an orphan nephew for the purpose of supplying the place of his parents, and educating him in a manner befitting his birth. When he found that the boy discovered little turn for letters, his kind uncle very properly took him away from school, with the intention of devoting him to mercantile affairs until he should be able to enter upon his own concerns. And such was the young man's prudence and discretion, that he quickly imbibed the habits of business practised by his patron, insomuch as to excite the admiration and surprise of all his friends and acquaintance. On this account he daily gained ground in the good graces of his uncle, who began to regard him with as much pride and pleasure as if he had been his own son. On the other hand, the young man always showed his uncle the respect due to a father; and so great was his mercantile proficiency, that when the old gentleman was seized with a series of tertian ague-fits, he was absolutely competent to take upon himself the charge of the office Still his uncle's fits were a source of great disquietude to him, and he spared no pains and expense to restore him to his usual excellent state of health. The care of young Federigo, therefore, for by this name he had been christened, soon placed old Messer Matteo on his legs again, which were directly employed to bring him down as fast as possible to his counting-house, where his nephew received him at the head of all the clerks with three commercial cheers, evincing the greatest satisfaction in the world, while the news diffused a placid joy over the countenances of all the jobbers in the city. He was still, however, advised by his doctors to adhere for a period to his gentle soporific and perspiring draughts, in order, as they assured him, to carry off the dregs of his disease, under which discipline he remained somewhat weak and querulous.

His careful nephew, unacquainted with this last prescription, one morning went into his room to consult him on some affairs, and was surprised to find him buried under an enormous load of bed-clothes, just as he was beginning to promote the medicinal warmth. He had closed his eyes, and lay perfectly quiet, invoking the moisture to appear with all a patient's anxiety and fervency of feeling, which cannot endure the least interference with the grand object he has in view. The careful nephew approached on tiptoe, fearful of rousing his good uncle too suddenly, and was concerned to behold him lying apparently in so piteous a plight. Anxious lest he had met with a relapse,

he began to accuse himself of not having been sufficiently careful in preventing him from resuming business too soon. The old gentleman at first laughed a little on hearing his over-scrupulous observations, then he became rather uneasy at his repeated inquiries and lamentations over him; and lastly, he was afraid that this untimely interruption might check the course of the fluids, without in the least benefiting the solids, respecting both of which he had lately become very particular. In fact, he began to fear that the necessary perspiration would be stopped, which, next to the stopping of the firm, was the thing he most dreaded in the world. When his careful nephew, therefore, again began to hint his precautions that he should not enter too soon into the office, the patient said in a somewhat angry tone, "For God's sake, get you gone! your lamentations make me quite sick; I tell you I am only taking a sweat." "But I am sorry to think you have got a relapse; what can be the occasion of it? Do let me consult the doctor about it, for it were better to take it in time;" and so saying, he was hastening out of the room. No longer able to control his temper, and too impatient to explain, yet dreading to rise in a state of incipient perspiration, the old merchant raised his voice as loud as he dared, crying, "Don't go to the doctor, I say, and a plague upon you! only go out of the room." Upon this, the young man approaching nearer and marking his uncle's rising colour, who at the same time bestowed the most abusive epithets upon him, began to think he was a little touched in the head, and that there was the greater occasion for a sharp leech the more he asserted the contrary. As he stood in a thoughtful posture, with his eyes fixed on the inflamed countenance of his uncle, the calmness of his manner and his fixed resolution of calling a physician so incensed the latter that he suddenly burst into a violent rage, threatening not only to cut him off without a farthing, but to knock his brains out instantly if he ventured to provoke him more; for which purpose he would rise, though he was in a beautiful perspiration. These words now confirmed the young gentleman's suspicions that something was wrong in his uncle's upper regions, being quite unlike himself, and he began to lament his situation louder than ever, ending with prayers and ejaculations for a physician. The uncle upon this put his threats into execution, leaping suddenly from his bed, while Federigo, on the other hand, believing him to be seized with a delirious paroxysm, ran towards him to keep him down lest he should commit some horrible mischief. Escaping, however, from his hands, the enraged patient endeavoured to seize a large cudgel which he kept in the room, a design against which the young gentleman exerted himself to the utmost of his power. A sharp contest for the possession of the stick now took place, sometimes inclining to one side, sometimes to the other; though the youth, believing his uncle endowed with the supernatural strength of a lunatic, was frequently on the point of being overcome. His great object was to secure the patient before he succeeded in obtaining the cudgel and inflicting the severe castigation which he threatened; and gathering strength from his despair, he began to press Messer Maffeo very hard, who, engaging in his night-cap and gown, certainly fought at a great dis-

advantage. His breath began to grow short and his strength to fail, and no longer able to utter a word, he fairly yielded to his adversary. The latter not venturing to let a madman loose, held him firmly down, pinioning his hands behind him and fixing his knees upon his stomach. When he had at length bound him hand and foot, the careful nephew again commenced his lamentations over him, regretting that so sensible a man should have run mad so suddenly. On this his uncle beginning to grin and show his teeth, he very calmly buried him under a heap of bed-clothes, and locking him up fast in the chamber, went to consult a physician The doctor, being just on the point of visiting one of the young princes at the court, had only time to advise the careful nephew to apply a couple of sharp blisters upon his uncle's shoulders, and he would endeavour to call upon him in the evening. He would then if necessary order him something of a still more caustic nature, and bleed the patient copiously. For there was nothing, he said, like meeting the evil in the beginning, and applying the remedies while the patient had strength to bear them The anxious Federigo accordingly hastened to the surgeon's house, and finding him, unluckily for his uncle, at home, he took him, armed with lancet and blisters, along with him. Proceeding with all haste, they soon arrived at the patient's residence, the young man relating by the way the whole of his late engagement, as a clear proof of the patient's lunacy The ancient housekeeper met them at the door, crossing herself devoutly and shedding tears as she repeated further instances of the insanity of her poor master, who had never ceased to bite and kick and roar most outrageously since his nephew had left the house.

And indeed well he might, for instead of being allowed to rise and attend to business as usual, he found himself violently provoked, assaulted, bound down like a felon, and locked up as in a cage, and all by his prudent, careful nephew. Such a case was enough to have driven Solomon himself out of his wits, to say nothing of a man of business; and by the time his persecutors approached the chamber, the violence of his proceedings certainly afforded strong presumptive evidence against him. When they appeared in his presence, however, he grew more furious than before. "What, in Heaven's name, must we do?" cried his nephew. "Let us stay till he has worn himself out and the paroxysm is somewhat abated; we can then apply our caustics," said the barbarous leech, "without fear of risk." "No, I think we had better begin now," replied the careful nephew, "let us lose no time, for he will do himself some injury if we permit him to go on thus Follow me, and do not be afraid, for I think I shall manage him better this time," continued our young hero with the utmost coolness; "and when once I have pinioned down his arms, you may seize him by the legs" "But he is mad, quite mad," cried the surgeon. "Let him alone, I say! when the frenzy subsides you will find he will go to sleep, and we can seize him then." Such, in fact, was shortly the case, for, wearied with his violent efforts and exertions, the poor man soon after they retired threw himself exhausted upon his couch, and fell into a sound sleep But he was not long permitted to enjoy it; for the wily leech, then addressing his nephew, said, "Now

is the time he is in a deep slumber, and what we have to do let us do quickly." "Softly, softly," said the careful Federigo as he laid hands upon the poor merchant; "there, I have him now! bring the blisters and a basin for the blood before he is well awake." "Murder! help, help! for Heaven's sake, help!" cried the patient, suddenly awakening and beholding the fell surgeon approaching with the lancet and basin in hand; but vain were his cries, vain all his efforts to extricate himself from his impending fate. The more he struggled the more did Federigo think it his duty to use prompt remedies, and Messer Maffeo shortly lay as helpless as a new-born child. The surgeon, however, in securing his legs had already received several severe contusions in the face; for which he was proceeding to take ample revenge in the blood of his enemy. At first, indeed, he thought of running away, but the young man encouraged him to do his duty, while the patient, on his side, exhibited symptoms of extreme rage and terror at his approach The phlebotomist again advanced and again drew back, like a spider that has got a wasp in his toils, holding his trenchant blade in his hand; nor was it until he was offered a double fee that he flew at him, and, in spite of all his shrieks and struggles, fixed a deadly blister upon either shoulder. He next attempted to draw blood, the careful nephew holding the arm while the surgeon with the same caution proceeded to pierce the vein; and having accomplished this and applied some hot cataplasms to the soles of his feet, the man of blood departed. The patient now lay exposed to the rising pangs of the caustics, bound hand and foot. Growing hotter and hotter, they at length became so intolerable that he declared he felt them eating his flesh away and drinking his blood; that gout and colic were a mere jest to them; and that he would give up the whole of the business and all he was possessed of in the world if his cruel nephew would consent to release him. The latter, however, only thought it a further sign of madness, and proposed to adopt still stronger applications, saying to the servant in the presence of the wretched patient, "Run, quick, as far as the surgeon's; bring a large blister for the head, and I will shave him myself." Bitterly now did the poor merchant rue the hour when he admitted his careful nephew into his house, nor was it until he found all threats and imprecations vain, and after the blisters had done their work, that he succeeded by dint of quiet reason and argument in convincing the hopeful youth of the real state of the case, and that he had required nothing beyond a gentle sudorific.

NOVELLA III.

DURING the lifetime of Luigi Gonzaga, lord of Castel Goffredo, of distinguished memory, there flourished two very notorious rogues, who were among the most remarkable in all his dominions for the number of their depredations, but whose ingenuity could not, at length, prevent their falling into the hands of justice. They were brothers,

and natives of Cremona; and such was their sense of their own enormities, that on being taken they did not scruple to confess them, without awaiting the tardier process of torture. They may be said, therefore, to have been sentenced at their own desire, having given very sufficient reasons why they should suffer. Luckily, however, there was a certain Messer Pietro, a rich uncle of theirs, well stricken in years and somewhat infirm, who still retained such a regard for the honour of his family that he did not altogether like the idea of seeing his nephews hanged.

Without staying, therefore, until he felt himself perfectly restored, for he still had a few twinges of the gout, he first lined his purse well with ducats, and then set out towards the seat of justice, determined to try whether they would have any efficacy in removing the stain which would otherwise infallibly attach to the family escutcheon When he arrived at the place, he began by the usual methods of prayer and petition to beg the lives of his unlucky young relatives, a process which proved perfectly fruitless, inasmuch as the Duke's love of justice was in exact proportion to his dislike of villains and his encouragement of honest men. Besides, he had put his hand to their sentence, and seemed resolved for once, right or wrong, that they should be shorter by the head which had devised so many ingenious plans of mischief. Tears, and moans, and groans were all richly lavished by the old man to no sort of purpose, until he had very nearly reached the day of execution before he could prevail upon himself to change his measures and resort to the more solid arguments he had brought in his purse The Duke had already been so much annoyed by him, that he always rode away on his approach, yet wherever he happened to stop or turn, the old man was sure to intercept, to meet, or to attack him in his rear. Wearied at length with his importunities, the Duke summoned his train and rode away to hunt at Goito, not far from Mantua, where he understood that Duke Frederic II. was then engaged in the same sport He was received by him very graciously, and proved a very agreeable addition to the party, who indulged themselves in every kind of pleasure they could imagine; until one day, as they were issuing forth, the countenance of the wearisome old man again presented itself, and he began exactly in the same tone with his petition where he had before left off Yes, he stood there on his gouty feet, but how he got there nobody could tell, except the poor steed, which in his haste he had ridden to death by the way So his Excellency was here compelled to hold a fresh colloquy, which was lengthened by some of the courtiers, with whose easy consciences the bribes of the cunning old Cremonese had already been busy. Such was the effect, indeed, that they now began to support the old gentleman in his pretensions, observing first that it was a sad pity, and then, as the Duke took it easily, that it was a horrible piece of injustice that two such fine young fellows should be hanged. In proportion as the good uncle plied them with ducats, they became more and more clamorous for mercy, insisting, among other things, that the two rogues had served like valiant soldiers in the Duke's army and deserved a better fate. For they knew that this would be a powerful

plea with him; and such were, in short, the lies and impostures of all kinds which they succeeded in palming upon their noble master, that he really began to think the prisoners were about to be very ill used, though they ought to have been executed long ago. They, moreover, lauded the Duke for his great humanity, and, as such sycophants are apt to do, they so completely won his ear by their vile flatteries as to convince him that it would be one of the most pious acts in the world to revoke the sentence against two of the most accomplished villains in his dominions Indeed, he was glad to be able on any terms to escape the sight of the old man and the worrying entreaties of his courtiers. The petitioner's ducats being well-nigh exhausted, there was no time to be lost, for he knew that if he did not carry his nephews' pardon in his pocket before they were quite gone, the promises made would be void and he should have the whole to pay over again. With his last bribe, therefore, he prevailed upon a wily courtier to procure an order, signed by the Duke's hand, to the judge of the district, remitting the punishment for the sake of a slight fine, and having received the ducal seal, it was delivered to the troublesome old man. By this time he was become nearly weary of his undertaking, and almost regretted, as he parted with his last douceur, that he had not left his hopeful nephews to their fate. In fact, such was his chagrin that he was seized with an acute fever only the very day before the time appointed for their execution, while their pardon still remained in his pocket. What was now to be done? It was impossible he could reach the seat of justice himself, and in whom could he confide so precious a charge? On consulting the wily courtier, a messenger was pointed out to him, one of the most celebrated for swiftness of foot and secrecy of despatch among all the scouts at court. He was hired, therefore, at a moment's warning, while the sole consolation of the good uncle was the hope of living long enough to behold once more the faces of his wretched nephews, and of bestowing upon them a little dying advice.

Having given him, therefore, the most particular directions to lose no time upon the road, and even paid a sum in advance, the troublesome old gentleman awaited with some anxiety the news of his trusty messenger's return He was to be at the place early the next morning, and to deliver the letter into the judge's own hands, after which he was to receive a further reward. Fired at this last idea, and eager to maintain his character as the most swift-footed Mercury at court, he posted away without stopping until he reached Castel Goffredo, where, taking a little repose, he proceeded early to the city gate, observing to the captain that he was on the Duke's business and must have his pass. Proceeding accordingly, he was just entering the great square near the judge's house when he was met by an immense concourse of people, in the midst of whom were the two identical prisoners heavily chained, just going to the place of execution. How should the messenger, however, know this? He believed he was in very good time, and being quite unacquainted with the particular nature of the business, he determined to stop and watch the whole proceeding. Falling into the crowd, he approached the scaffold, saw them mount,

and witnessed them take their final leave of the world; after which he proceeded very leisurely with their pardon in his pocket to the house of the judge. He congratulated himself by the way on the expeditious manner in which he had fulfilled the old man's commands, and presented himself with no little importance at the mansion of justice, expecting to receive a further fee, with many commendations for his celerity and despatch.

On opening the letter and finding the nature of its contents, the judge uttered an exclamation of surprise, watching the messenger attentively, and questioning him very narrowly as to the occasion of his delay. "Dolt, idiot, blunderhead!" he exclaimed, "when did you set out from Goito?" "One hour before midnight; all in the dark, please your lordship; that is, I got my orders about that time, and set off at two" "You did, did you?" replied the other. "You are enough to make Solomon himself blaspheme! Where did you stop, you most egregious fool?" "Stop! stop! I ran every mile of the way, please your lordship; and never stopped at all, except to see two robbers executed this morning, and I knew I could afford time for that." "Ah! villain, idle villain!" returned the judge; "do you know you have been the death of both of them, and it were well if you could lose your head in their place;" and he proceeded to upbraid him in no very gentle terms, being really concerned at so untoward an accident, and, moreover, being, for a judge, very humanely inclined. In this last point, indeed, he was very unlike the generality of his learned brethren, who upon passing sentence before dinner or in a bad humour are very apt to make light of persons' lives. Our swift-footed Mercury now found himself in a strange dilemma; for in place of being praised, as on former occasions, for his speed and alacrity, he only gained hard words, his lordship threatening to make a severe example of him. His pride, however, was so much hurt in being reproached as an idle, lounging, slovenly sluggard, unworthy of the Duke's confidence, or indeed of anything but a halter, that he could no longer restrain his indignation. "My lord," he replied, "your lordship ought to speak within some bounds, and recollect that you are speaking to one of the best, nay, the very best and swiftest foot-courier in the Duke's service. Consider, I set out at midnight, and I got here before daybreak this morning, stopping only, as I tell you, to see those two villains kicking their heels in the air; and surely I had a right to have some little diversion after running so many leagues so very fast The old gentleman ought to have told me the particular business I was engaged for; as it is, you see it is not my fault" "It is your fault, and I will make an example of you for it, sir: I will teach you a little more humanity than to take a pleasure and lose your time in beholding tragedies of this kind." "Oh, Lord, Lord!" cried the poor fellow, falling at the judge's feet, "forgive me this time, and I will never stop as long as I have breath again. Oh, oh! I wish I had only known I was to save the poor, dear, innocent creatures' lives; I would have been here before daybreak; I swear by my legs, I would!" "Know! you rogue," echoed the judge, "did not you know it was a matter of life and death?" "No, my lord, nobody told me anything about that," cried

the distressed courier. "Why, that something alters the aspect of the case, to be sure," said the judge; "it will turn out to be the old gentleman's fault, I believe, after all" "And he will most likely be dead before I get back," cried the courier, "so that there will be no need to tell him at all." "Aye, aye! you will finish him and all his relations, I daresay," said the judge; "get away with you, rogue, and do not stop to see anybody hanged by the way; but it is all perhaps for the best; it is all in the hands of the Lord." And so in truth it appeared to be, inasmuch as neither of these devoted wretches were in the least deserving of pardon, and justly suffered the penalty of their manifold sins and offences. Of this his lordship took care to send a full account to the Duke, regretting, nevertheless, that for once it had not been in his power to comply with his Excellency's commands, which he should have done had they been arch-fiends of mischief instead of common felons, by pardoning them as he had wished. "The whole blame of the affair," he said, "attached to the old uncle, who ought not to have intrusted so important a commission to the hands of an ignorant messenger, who instead of performing it stopped by the way to see his nephews hanged."

Novels of Celio Malespini.

CELIO MALESPINI.[1]

CELIO MALESPINI, a Florentine gentleman, though said to have traced his birth to Milan, flourished about the middle of the sixteenth century. No writer of fiction produced more abundant specimens of the kind, nor more rude and unpolished, perhaps, in point of style. In this respect, indeed, his novels, amounting to two hundred, are said to be esteemed in Italy as complete examples of almost every fault of language and expression to be avoided by writers of a pure taste. But his materials, and his skilful and humorous adaptation of them, are often excellent; while his harshness of phraseology will not be found to grate upon the ears of the English reader. The author feigns the relation of his novels to have taken place at a palace in the district of Trivigi, whither several ladies and gentleman had resorted to escape the ravages of the plague then raging at Venice. This is known to have occurred in the year 1576; and from several circumstances related in the novels themselves, we may gather the date of their composition to have been not many years subsequent. A great portion are believed to have been founded upon real events; and in many instances the mention of persons and of particular times and places is introduced. It is thus he alludes to Bianca Cappello, afterwards consort of Francesco de' Medici, Grand Duke of Tuscany, whose nuptials were celebrated in 1579, and are very minutely described by the novelist; and there is reason to believe that he wrote shortly after the period here alluded to.

Malespini entered into the service of the King of Spain, under the government of the Milanese, though in what capacity does not appear. Some particulars, however, may be gathered from Novel XI. Part II., in which he gives a description of the splendid nuptials of Duke Guglielmo of Mantua, celebrated in the year 1561. He acquaints us that the Cavalier Lione Aretino and Luca Contile wrote on this occasion to the Marquis Pescara, entreating him to send them some gentleman of the Malespini family, in the service of King Philip, to assist them, as their particular friend, in a due preparation for the approaching solemnities. Most probably this was no other than their friend Celio, who seems to have contributed not a little to the humour of the scene. After holding a public office some time in the Milanese, Malespini proceeded to Venice, where he was residing at the time of the pestilence, which he describes in his forty-eighth Novel, Part I., as having laid desolate that beautiful city. There, with more fearful

[1] Ducento Novelle del Sig Celio Malespini, nelle quali si raccontano diversi avvenimenti così lieti come mesti e stravaganti, &c., 4to Venezia, 1609

potent temptations of all sorts on all sides, which it would be next to a miracle he should resist. For the grand carnival was at hand; an epidemic of wit and pleasure had seized upon the heads of all; and he had already elected himself chief of a new company, called the Ten, who had pledged themselves to the public to surpass all others in every kind of innocent riot, mischief, and excess. Now, as each of the ten members had agreed to conduct a lady twice a week to their banquet, besides furnishing ten crowns towards defraying the company's supper, it inevitably followed that he must often be indebted to some fair deputy, in his own lady's absence, to grace her place. Hearing these tidings, it was not long before the beauty of Palermo made her appearance here, as a kind of guardian angel to our poor friend; and to the extreme envy or admiration of more than half the ladies in Venice. The Ten then began in good earnest to celebrate the season, assembling always at the best house, with the most splendid establishment belonging to the company, though each contributed his own portion to the entertainment, including the rarest exhibitions of every kind. Thus nobly devoting themselves to every variety of amusement, their ingenuity was kept always upon the stretch how to vie most successfully with the rival Company of the Calza, famous for its heroic excesses and grand exhibitions of old, supported by the wealth and patronage of the chief nobility of the city, each having taken a vow to render the scene as brilliant and happy as games, and jousts, and balls, and banquets, music, and comedy, and every species of humour could make it. With this view a glorious theatre was seen, at the command of the Company of the Calza, to spring up as if by enchantment into the air, with its rich painted pillars, and cornices of white marble, its friezes of gold, and its interior ornamented with all the most beautiful specimens of art of which the city could boast. Below these were seen stationed still rarer forms of breathing symmetry and beauty, a hundred of our most lovely women representing ancient statues, their folds of white drapery arranged and flowing, as if wrought out of marble by the sculptor's hand. Such a blaze of beauty bursting upon the spectator as he entered produced the most lively impression, heightened as it was by the splendour of gems and jewellery, and the music of a thousand instruments which filled the whole air and was heard along the waters; for will you believe me when I assure you that this vast theatre, with all its splendid embellishments, was not the offspring of the earth, but borne along by two immense galleys, like a creature of the ocean, over the Adriatic waves? Surrounded by a thousand light and sea-winged gondolas, I saw her bearing back her proud and glorious way, until she had reached the bridge Rivoalto and thence returned to St. Mark's, safely discharging her beauteous freight, while the air rang with plaudits as the fair procession moved forwards to the great hall of council, ready prepared for their reception. For Justice herself had now assumed another face; the benches were turned into dining-tables, the symbols of punishment were exchanged for the milder emblems of the queen of love and the god of wine; while the fairest and brightest faces of Venice feasted the eyes of the proudest and bravest cavaliers in the world.

Desirous of beholding so rare an exhibition as the sailing theatre afforded, the new convivial company, with our Sicilian at their head, could no longer refrain from besetting the piazza of St. Mark's, on whose steeple stood a Turkish mountebank ready to throw himself headlong down, without hurting himself, if possible, for the amusement of his friends In this manner, before the enchanted theatre had finished its voyage, the ladies been safely handed out again by their *cavalieri serventi*, and the Turk leaped in safety from the very top of St. Mark's upon a rope stretched out below to receive him, to the terror of all beholders, the best part of the day was well-nigh flown. Our joyous company again departed, bearing with them the materials for their evening festival, towards the Merciaria, and thence towards San Jacopo dall' Orio, to lay siege to the mansion of merchant Gazzuola, and destroy the fragile preparations he had been making to meet the carnival for the last twelve months. On their way, however, just as they approached San Giuliano, they had the misfortune to encounter the procession of the old Company of the Calza, in all their pride of patrician pomp, followed by a vast retinue bearing their gold and silver censers and covers, and at no great distance the delicious materials of the banquet itself, according to established custom from time immemorial. Here, then, was a delicate question to be discussed, a nice point of difference; for whether was the old or the new company of revellers to yield the way? Unluckily it was not to be adjusted by dint of discussion; and a singular contest at length commenced between the banquet-bearers on either side, a truly heroic battle of the cooks, in which some of the implements of their pleasing art became formidable weapons, dealing very unpalatable strokes, while showers of cups, and bowls, and glasses, with still more precious wares, flew winged with their own destruction on every side. Great, indeed, were the feats of strength and skill wrought by the followers of either company, animated as they were by the presence of the head-cooks, and impelled to fresh efforts by their bottle-holders, the butlers, who ceased not to renew the flagging spirits of the combatants with the "red grape's juice." As long as such ammunition held out, the conflict continued to rage with equal ferocity on both sides, until, the old Company being the most liberally supplied, the opposite party was at length compelled to give way. Many heroes had already measured their length upon the ground, some levelled with ladles, some stabbed with toasting forks, and others lingering under the torments of too much hot maccaroni and burning soup.

But as the patrician chiefs of both companies, as well of the Company of the Calza as of the Ten, had deigned to take not the least notice of the affray, it was incumbent upon the more plebeian class to marshal themselves once more into order, and conduct the procession in the same style as before. Still they could by no means flatter themselves with making so splendid and magnificent an exhibition as they had done: the lustre of the whole equipment, of their arms, their dresses, their plate, and of their very scutcheons, was faded, as it were, and gone. The people no longer continued to gaze upon it with the same veneration and respect; having been infinitely better amused in

witnessing the engagement, and sharing some portion of the spoils of the field. The procession, however, was still extremely grand and imposing, though shorn of some of its beams; the richness and variety of the dresses, the dazzling splendour of hose and doublet, and the embroidered stockings, the badge of the order, covered with gold and silver lace, sparkling with precious pearls and gems, diamonds, emeralds, and rubies, could surely be equalled by nothing less than a coronation day. There walked in the train of each lord four pages decked in rich parti-coloured vests and mantles of silk, followed again by an infinite multitude of plate and cup bearers, with a great variety of precious vases filled with sweets and perfumes, with the rarest fruits and birds, and the most exquisite imitations wrought in sugar of almost every kind of object existing under the sun. Among these were to be seen a fleet of glorious galleys sailing amidst a sea of sweets; the boldest figures in relievo mingling in mock battles; ladies with bright faces watching cavaliers contending in the ring; and a thousand other ingenious devices: sights which called forth the applauding shouts of the spectators.

But the procession of the companies by night, amidst a grand illumination of the whole city, was still more striking and imposing, attended by a concert of the finest music, which, repeated from a thousand gondolas, was heard far over the bosom of the Adriatic. First came two beautiful pages, bearing two large waxen torches; next, the champion of the Company of the Calza, followed by two other pages, also with torches, and men-at-arms, with their squires and grooms. Secondly, came the grand standard, which appeared on fire with the splendour of its ornaments, and a person with a most exquisitely wrought statue, borne in a large vase of gold and silver, richly enchased and glowing with the brightest colours. Thirdly, appeared the golden plate-bearers, with every species of imitative confectionery, followed by a long line of attendants, the meanest of whom bore satin suits, gold bracelets, and large gold chains about their necks. Each of the members was attended, as near as I can recollect, by a train of six hundred followers, so that before the whole party had arrived in succession at the great council-hall, where the banquet was to be held, and where they found all the most bright and beautiful ladies of the city awaiting their arrival, whose splendid ornaments cast around them artificial day, the chief part of the night was already consumed. But why should I attempt to describe the convivial scenes which there took place—scenes with which too many of my hearers are familiar to require the feeble delineation of my hand? Suffice it to observe that ere the joyous guests had yet ceased to celebrate their convivial rites, the sun had been watching them many hours out of the east; when the music growing fainter and fainter, as the late nimble hands and feet beat time to its flagging mirth, and the richly painted floors being strewed with the spoils of stormed castles, wounded knights, and a thousand artificial relics of a miniature world in ruins, the revel rout became desirous of adjourning the further continuation of their mysteries to another carnival, which my lovely audience must be aware will soon be here. Yet we cannot flatter ourselves that it will dispense

to the happy people of Venice half the amusement which the late season—a period that well deserves to be better commemorated—afforded to us all.

PART I. NOVELLA XCVI.

At the time when the Marquis of Pescara was governor in the Milanese, there lived two gentlemen of the respective names of Raffaello Chiecaro and Antonio Capputo, who had obtained from the senate the use of some public stoves, which, merely paying a small annual tax, made them very large returns, consuming only half the usual proportion of fuel. Now, near the piazza of San Stefano resided a certain retainer to the court of King Philip, a man of a free and liberal turn of mind, very generally esteemed by his acquaintance How he first became intimate with Signor Chiecaro I am at a loss to state; but certain it is that he was frequently seen beguiling his hours at the house of that wily Genoese. The latter, desirous one day of trying how far he could play upon the courtier's credulity, observed to him, "Do you see this sonnet, my dear signor? If you please, I will teach you a very curious art Read it; it is Petrarch's, and begins, you see—

'Rotta è l'alta colonna, e 'l verde Lauro,' &c

Now, strange as you may think it, I will show you a different sonnet under this, beginning—

'Aimè il bel viso, aimè il soave sguardo'"

"Nay, I defy you, that is impossible," cried his friend, "or, if it be possible, pray let me learn quickly how it may be done." With an air of importance the Genoese put his hand into his pocket and took out a small flagon, into which he dipped a bit of cotton and touched the letters of the first sonnet, which quickly made way for those of the second. To the eyes of his companion the whole of this appeared little less than a miracle: he declared, in his excessive admiration, that it was a secret worthy the possession of the greatest princes in the world. "Yet it is yours for all that," replied the Genoese, "and when you wish to write what is not meant for every eye, you have only to dissolve so much Roman vitriol in a drop of fresh water, and take a virgin quill never yet contaminated with ink and write what you please. The moment it is dry the writing will disappear; and having brought this to perfection, you will next prepare the following kind of ink: Take a handful of wheat straw, set it on fire, but look well to your house, by clapping a large extinguisher upon it before it be well burnt out. The residue will be a fine charcoal, which you will please to boil in the specified quantity of white wine, which will give you the ink required to write upon any other subject in the same letter that you may think proper, the former inscription lying concealed. When you wish this last to appear, take some Istrian galls, pounded in

qua-vitæ, and having thus extracted their virtue, dip into it a piece of cotton; pass it lightly over the page, and the letter you want will appear." Here the Genoese ceased, and so delighted was the silly courtier with the secret that he would willingly have bestowed upon him any reward he had asked. But the time was not yet come, and having received it gratuitously, our hero could only evince his warm gratitude for the gift. Having gone thus far, Signor Chiecaro, elated at his success, touched upon a variety of other topics; among which, after inviting his friend to take the fresh air in his garden, he put the following question: "Pray, my dear signor, have you any room in your house with a close furnace that would retain the heat?" "Indeed I have," said the other, "and I will convince you of it directly." So introducing our Genoese into the place, who expressed himself perfectly satisfied with it, the latter again inquired, "Have you such a thing as a small cauldron in the house?" "Yes, I have," was the reply. "Well, let it be broken, then, into pieces of about four fingers' breadth, and let them be well heated over a huge charcoal fire. You will then cool them as I shall point out to you. Take half a flask of strong vinegar, throw into it a good handful of salt and as much pulverised tartar, and then suddenly quench the fiery metal in it by a speedy, deep, and satisfactory immersion. Repeat this five or six times over, by which the plates will be fully prepared for the ensuing process; the contrast between heat and cold being everything upon which we have to depend. These experiments will find you sufficient employment until the morrow, when I will return and acquaint you with the grand processes I have in view; only let the whole be conducted with the utmost secrecy, and no one touch the key of the apartment but yourself."

Flattering himself with the possession of some yet more valuable secrets, our simple hero promised to obey him in everything, and accordingly the next morning exhibited the result of his labours to his view. Commending him very highly, the wily Genoese now said, "Truly, I believe you will never be at a loss how to proceed." "I believe so too," said our conceited gentleman, to the no small amusement of the other, "for you see what I have done." "Next, then," added his friend, "you must cut up the metal into small bits, weigh out of it three ounces, and melt it down in a crucible until it becomes liquid. Into this throw, leaf by leaf, the herb which I now give you," taking about fifty plantain stalks out of his handkerchief. "Do you know what it is?" "Oh, yes; there is plenty of it growing in my meadow just by," said our hero. "You are a fortunate man, then," rejoined his friend. "You must throw it into the melted copper, and leave it to cool in the crucible, watching it frequently till I come again." "I will take care to do so," said our hero, and proceeded forthwith to business. His next object was to gather as much of the plantain root as he could possibly find, to give the proper tinge, as he was told, to the metal, and he proceeded to weigh out and note down the various proportions with a piece of charcoal upon the wall. Being quite ignorant, however, of the process of fusing, of the proper degree of heat, and the best mode of confining it in the crucible, he placed it on a

large heap of charcoal, and set to work with a little pair of bellows, about as powerful as a lady's fan, to blow it into a flame. When he thought it began to melt, he opened the crucible, and exposing it to the air, the metal became as hard and cold as before. Repeating the same experiment until he was quite weary and half roasted alive before the fire, to his infinite delight he saw it begin to melt, and threw in the plantain leaves as directed. Then, no longer able to stand, and covered with dust and smoke, he lay down in a profuse perspiration, awaiting the arrival of his arch-deceiver, who approved of everything he had done, and next advised him to go and consult some chemists as to the value of his products, and learn how much they would give him the ounce. Believing he should soon penetrate into some greater secrets, faint and weary as he was, our hero hastily seized his cloak and sword, and ran as fast as his strength permitted to the shop of a certain M. Ercole, an assayer, and found him just as he was going to supper. Earnestly entreating him to put it to the test upon the spot, though the assayer begged hard for a little time, he was at length prevailed upon to try a small piece of the new metal over the fire, to which he added a few bits of lead. Soon after he declared, on examining the crucible, that he had detected several grains of gold, and that he was prepared to offer him two crowns and a half per ounce for such a product. Being well aware he had not made use of any gold, our experimentalist upon this observed, "But you are very much deceived, friend Ercole, in supposing there is any gold in the case. I did not put a single fraction of a grain in it." "Surely," said the assayer, "you will allow me to believe my own eyes; here is the gold, and you are one of the most fortunate men in the world if you really did not put any gold in it." Hearing these words, the poor gentleman was overpowered with joy, and beseeching him to make a fresh trial, which succeeded equally well with the former, he assured his friend the assayer that he should be glad to let him have the whole of the metal on the terms he had mentioned The assayer was extremely anxious to learn the exact process he had observed in fusing it, which our hero, however, with an air of infinite importance, tried to evade, and at length flatly refused to make him acquainted with the secret. Then, promising to bring fresh samples very soon, he retired and went to rest, though quite unable to close his eyes on account of the multitude of castles in the air that ceased not to haunt his imagination. His next meeting with his friend the Genoese was a very joyous one. He informed him, with tears of gratitude, of the grand test and the complete success of his experiments. "Then I am now satisfied," returned the Genoese, "for I perceive you are quite equal to conduct the whole process without my farther assistance Indeed, your facility and skill are truly astonishing, and if you still indulge the least doubt of your own ability, pray mention it." "Nay," replied his friend, "I have none; I think I stand in need of no farther directions: and I have only to express my gratitude for the ample instructions you have already given me. Only acquaint me in what manner I can at all requite you, for I assure you I shall think nothing too great for the noble secrets you have confided in me." "Say no more," said the

Genoese; "I have only to entreat that you will value the secret for my sake, and unfold it to no one."

Unable to make any adequate return to this kind and courteous language, our hero could only press his friend's hand in silence, who, embracing him tenderly, took his departure. Thus fancying himself in full possession of unlimited wealth, he began to calculate the different sums which he intended to bestow upon his friends and relatives, saying to himself as he proceeded, "Yes, I will purchase the castle for my good Paolo shall have an estate now, but Giovanni must Pietro; my good Paolo shall have an estate now, but Giovanni must have the marquisate. Thanks, great thanks to the Almighty, I shall at length have a little money in my pocket in addition to his majesty's pension, which I can throw about on all sides as I please. My sole fear is that the money-market will not be able to supply me fast enough for my precious metal, though I dispose of it in all parts of the world." Then, after revolving the subject deeply in his mind, he resolved to form a complete establishment for the manufacture of the precious article, hiring a number of artificers to assist him in the business, and to collect a quantity of plantain roots wherever they were known to grow. These he stored up by fifty and a hundred loads at a time, until he had completely ransacked the country for many miles round. He employed all the boys and women he could find, whom he supplied with baskets to bring the plantains to his house in such quantities as to excite the curiosity and wonder of all the neighbourhood.

Inquisitive to learn the nature of such proceedings, his wife frequently applied to him for an explanation, but always in vain, being told to attend to her household affairs as he was fully competent to manage his own. When he had made his final preparations, his friend the Genoese one day came to him, with a countenance full of anxiety, and accosted him thus: "I wish, from my very soul, I had never undertaken this speculation from the senate, with all its pretended privileges: a curse upon all such furnaces, I am heartily sick of the job!" "My dear Raffaello," cried our hero, "what is it that has thus disturbed you?" "What is it?" replied the wily Genoese; "why, it is this: I wish to go and leave this business with which our senate has saddled me (and yet I am compelled to keep to my engagement), and to set out immediately for Genoa. Now, I am come to beg you will please to lend me a hundred ducats until my return, which I shall take as a particular favour." "Oh, certainly," said our hero, and immediately went out, and returned with a bag of gold, saying, "Help yourself, my dear friend, and take as many as you please; for I owe you more, far more than anything I can repay. Indeed, I wish you would deign to put my gratitude to a severer test; I have friends who will join me in assisting you to a much larger amount." "I thank you," said the Genoese, "I will only take this sum at present; it is quite sufficient for the object I have in view." Then quietly pocketing the money, he took his departure, leaving our poor hero to carry on his operations alone. He had already expended more than a thousand crowns in the purchase of some buildings from Angelo Corro, near Monte Brianza, admirably situated, as he imagined, for the purpose of carrying on his extensive business. Hither were

conveyed the materials of his new trade, loads of charcoal and plantain, with crucibles, brass cauldrons, and silver plate; believing he was the first man who could boast of having set up a grand manufactory of gold. And here, shutting himself up, he superintended his enormous furnace, stripping himself to the skin in order the better to heat his crucibles, and blowing with all his might to produce the fusion of his metals. Great was the fire, and great his toil and torture, though not equal to his desire of beholding the gold. Three hours incessantly he blew and blew, trying different kinds of processes and different sized vessels, without the least effect. The strong heat and the working of the bellows together began at length to prove quite too much for his strength, while he stood in a violent perspiration from head to foot without being any nearer the accomplishment of his task. The rest of his fires were in the same predicament, not the least fusion of the metals appearing, and the whole of his establishment, servants and assistants, were as weary and exhausted as himself. Eight hours had now elapsed, when the place becoming heated like one immense stove, and our poor hero having twice fainted away, he was borne home by his people, who refused any longer to bear the brunt of the day. His wife, who had observed a remarkable change in him of late, an unaccountable elevation and inequality of spirits, wild at times, and at times depressed, conceived no time was to be lost. Seeing him, then, brought home in the condition we have described, his face fiery, and his clothes covered with foam and dust, crying out at the same time loudly for drink, she compassionately ran towards him, and accosted him thus: "What can be the reason, my dear, of your strange conduct, shutting yourself up day and night in a place too hot for a salamander? Would to Heaven that that old wretch of a Genoese had broken his neck before you saw him! would that the great demon had caught him in his clutches! would that you had not been such a fool, my dear, as to have listened to him!" Hearing himself thus tenderly apostrophised by his wife, who presumed to intermeddle in things that he thought did not concern her, the poor man, impelled by rage and disappointment lent her two hearty cuffs on the side of her head, which somewhat checked the flow of her tenderness. Then, out of mere spite, instead of going to repose as he ought to have done, he got up and ran to his friend the assayer's, to put his folly to a further test, with the same unhappy result as before His final hopes now rested upon the return of the arch-villain Chiccaro to put him into the right way again, but after bearing the sickness of hope deferred with great fortitude during many weeks, he bethought him of following the Genoese, though he had no directions how to find him. First, however, he essayed the effect of sending letters and special messengers in all directions, without hearing the least tidings of him. His own personal exertions proved equally fruitless, and in this state of affairs, lost in a world of chimeras, he passed his unhappy time till Christmas About that time happening one day to be in company, he heard a party of gentlemen conversing, one of whom observed, "If you can do this, you will render me a great service; for a certain speculation by which I hoped

o become richer than the Grand Turk, has ended in smoke. An old villain of a Genoese, whom God confound, has emptied my pockets of all my ready cash, though he seemed to come, like Jupiter, in a golden shower." "And how," replied his friend, "did he inveigle you? What was the trick?" "What was the trick, indeed! You shall hear! He wanted to teach me how to make gold, and I, like a simple one who loves simplicity, wished to learn. For this purpose I advanced three hundred gold crowns, deposited in the hands of Luca Contile." "Did you speak of gold crowns?" cried our hero, no longer able to repress his curiosity, "and of a Genoese? For pity's sake, dear captain, go on!" This the captain did, and mutual explanations and condolements then took place. The only fact which they could clearly ascertain was that he had succeeded in the same manner in cheating them all; that he was gone, and no longer to be found. After conversing for some time together upon the subject, and considering in what way the losses they had suffered might best be repaired, they arrived at the conclusion that the most effectual plan would be to avail themselves of the same means as had been practised by the Genoese, whenever they had the good fortune to meet with any friend as simple as they had themselves been. Somewhat consoled with having hit upon this ingenious method of reimbursing themselves, they laughed heartily and took leave.

PART II. NOVELLA XI.

UPON the eve of the regal and splendid nuptials about to be solemnised between the Duke Guglielmo and the Princess Eleonora of Austria, the Marquis Pescara, then governor over the Milanese, despatched the Cavalier Lione Aretino, a celebrated sculptor, to direct the preparations in honour of the occasion at Mantua. After a number of ingenious plans had been proposed and rejected, it was finally agreed among persons of the finest taste and ability to select that of the "Arch of Loyal Lovers," so well described by Amadis of Gaul, to be represented with the richest embellishments. With this view, an admirable site was first pitched upon, one of the most beautiful, perhaps, ever chosen for the celebration of so joyous a festival. Several hundreds of people were immediately engaged, besides twenty directors brought by Aretino from Milan, well versed in similar matters and wholly devoted to the work. In vain should we attempt to describe the vast preparations, the grand statues, the beautiful pictures, the splendid illuminations hung in the air, and all the other miraculous exhibitions calculated to surprise the spectator. Enough to state they were declared by all to be equal to anything before exhibited by the greatest monarch upon earth. Both Tuscan and Latin verses were written for the occasion by that divine wit, Luca Contile, who did not disdain, also, to afford his assistance to the supreme artist, Aretino, wherever it might be most wanted. Yet both being of themselves unequal to achieve the grand objects they had in view, they wrote to the Marquis at Milan, entreating him to send them one of the Malespini, their intimate friend.

and a faithful servant of King Philip The Marquis, ever intent upon the Duke's interests, readily complied with their request, declaring that they could not have hit upon a more skilful hand, he having had a vast experience in the celebration of festivals of every kind in Milan Despatching Malespini, therefore, post to Mantua, he was met by a deputation of merry gentlemen, who conducted him to the scene of action with loud applause. After their witty compliments were over, he directly set his head to work, as it was his duty, to devise how he might best add to the splendour and attraction of the scenery, and so highly did the others approve of his opinions, that they resolved to commit the sole charge of the infernal regions, one of the very highest trust, to his hands. It was, indeed, of a most delicate nature, the whole of the fireworks being confined to this spot; so that he looked somewhat rueful in entering upon his new province, though he heartily devoted himself to the task for the poor cavalier's sake, overburdened as he was with the infinite variety of his duties. Everything was now conducted with the greatest diligence and despatch, Malespini awakening a spirit of emulation among his devils which communicated itself to the other artists. Even the Duke himself occasionally inspected the works, though it was a general rule, in order not to impede their progress, to admit no company except such as he introduced; for two of the gentlemen were always obliged to attend the Duke for the purpose of explaining everything; and so very irksome had this practice become, that the cavalier Aretino threw the whole burthen of it upon poor Malespini's shoulders. He had soon the wit, however, to take refuge in the lowest depths of his own infernal domain rather than expose himself to the eternal questions of the foolish courtiers, and there he always lay hid until the lords and ladies were gone.

The governor having already arrived at Mantua and taken possession of the king's palace, likewise visited the works, anxious to bring them to a speedy termination, as the royal visitors had nearly all arrived. But observing that there was a deficiency of glass in giving a fine reflection to the whole, Malespini was commissioned to go to Milan with large orders, which ought to have been already executed, and not to return without fulfilling them. These he despatched with such celerity, returning two days before the festival, that he won the applause of all the lords and princes present, not having broken a single chandelier by the way. Malespini, returning to his infernal labours, inspired such a degree of activity into his laziest imps as to extort the applause of all Yet some there were mightily afraid of burning their fingers with the work whenever his back or that of the cavalier was turned upon them. These he instigated by blows, and, moreover, importuned the Duke to let the same plan be adopted in his regions above as in those underneath. This likewise greatly expedited the business towards the last; for Aretino had just before been seized with such a fit of desperation, that he threatened to assassinate two of the rest, and throw up the whole concern as a hopeless job. So they got an order from the Duke for the artificers to work all night long, encouraging and scourging them by turns the whole of the time. By these means the magnificent pile seemed to

start into sudden existence, and was considered a miracle by the people. For the cavalier had now succeeded in drawing off the water from the lake into a sort of canal before the enchanted island, so that no one could approach it but by the bridge, where the cavaliers were to arrive after having engaged in battle and come off victors against the garrison. The cavaliers, namely, the Marquis Pescara, Don Giovanni d'Avalos, his brother, and Don Giorgio Mariquez, were to be led on by two Amazons towards the canal, over which a small wooden bridge projected by which they were to pass, when it became immediately submerged as before. Then they arrived under the Arch of the Loyal Lovers, over which a statue of bronze appeared with a trumpet in her hand, to welcome the approach of the conqueror, while a shower of flowers fell upon his head; until just as he passed under a great vault, he was suddenly assaulted by a number of naked weapons, and a huge hand was stretched forth which dragged him into the enchanted cave of Apollidone and Grimanessa, where he remained a prisoner. The cavalier being thus worsted, was next to be conducted by the two Amazons to the place where the bridge had disappeared, and the statue was seen venting fire and flame out of the trumpet. He was then to be seized by a host of devils and thrown into the inferno. It required a considerable effort of skill to compel the bridge to stay under water, which was at length, however, devised by the cavalier applying some ropes and iron bands in such a way as to make it rise and fall at pleasure. Requiring after this feat some little repose, he begged Malespini to direct the remainder of the work, and to take particular care that no one meddled with the bridge, which might destroy the machinery and break it into a thousand pieces. Having taken upon himself the duty of a sentinel, Malespini desired him to make his mind easy and get a little rest, for the whole was in safe hands. Then brandishing a huge stick, he went among the artificers, crying as he smote the more idle among them, "Courage, courage, my dear brothers! let us employ the little time that remains to some purpose!" Being thus engaged, about two hours before midnight torchlights were observed flashing in the theatre, followed by a large train of lords and princes. Malespini being aware of them at a distance, in order to avoid the reiterated persecutions to which he had formerly been subjected, ran and hid himself within his inferno, in hopes they might the sooner take their leave. The company then burst in upon him, consisting of the Cardinal Madruccio, followed by various prelates, the Dukes of Parma and of Mantua, the Marquis Pescara, with numerous counts and cavaliers. After inspecting the whole place they proceeded to the intended field of battle, wide and capacious, and extremely well laid out. Here the Duke Guglielmo, with a few of his friends, stopping till the rest of the party had passed on, was desirous of showing them the secret bridge. For this purpose he took hold of one of the ropes by which it was bound, and giving it a pretty smart jerk, and it happening to be the wrong one, the whole machinery broke with a tremendous crash, and the bridge rose up, dashing the water abroad on all sides. Malespini hearing the terrific sound, hastily ran towards the spot, and beholding the

bridge out of the water, and the machinery that had employed so many painful hours broken into pieces, which his friend, too, had just committed to his care, felt such a sudden emotion of anger, that, seeing the Duke, a little hunchbacked man with whose person he was unacquainted, standing near, and taking him for the prelate's clerk not far from him, he lent him several pretty severe blows upon the shoulders with the weapon he held in his hand. "Villain of a hunchback!" he cried, "I feel the greatest inclination to knock your brains out;" which he might, perhaps, have done, but for the speedy interference of those around him. The Duke, conscious of the mischief he had committed and seeing him in such a furious passion, replied not a word; while Malespini, raving and swearing, declared he had not done with him yet, and hastened as fast as possible to accuse the little hunchback before the Marquis. "There he is!" he cried, as the Duke with his few companions appeared. "See, my lord, what sort of people you permit to visit our works! Oh, my lord, he has broken the beautiful bridge, the Bridge of the Loyal Lovers, which was to grace the noble Duke's espousals! It is entirely broken!" In the meanwhile all the people present, on the appearance of the Duke, made their obeisance, when poor Malespini, beginning to suspect that all was not right, intently eyed the little hunchback whose head he had broken. But when the truth burst upon him, he grew pale and mute, while the blood seemed to stagnate in his veins—for he still held the fatal cudgel in his hands—as he beheld the Marquis and other princes paying homage to the Duke Though still smarting a little, the Duke could not help laughing at the pitiable appearance of his accuser, and addressing himself to the noblemen, he said, "I think I ought to be the accuser here: that gentleman has to answer for an assault; and truly, my lords, I was afraid he was going to flay me alive; it is wonderful how I escaped out of his hands" Then turning towards the trembling Malespini, he continued, "Come, friend, I believe we must both give and take, I have done you a terrible injury, and you have had your revenge" "Oh, my Lord Duke," stammered out the unhappy gentleman, "Oh, my lord, may I presume your Excellency will ever forgive me? Your Excellency must be informed that I had never the honour of being acquainted with your person, or this dreadful affair could not have happened. attribute it, then, only to my regard for your Excellency's interests." "I do," replied the Duke, "for you have given me a very sensible proof of it, and I feel it, as I believe I ought to do, for meddling where I had no business," and upon this he shrugged his shoulders and shook hands with Malespini, while the whole palace rang with mingled laughter and applause. Still Malespini was ill at ease, for he had now to encounter the reproaches of Aretino, who seemed, however, somewhat consoled at the revenge he had taken, which he thought was not at all too much, though they both wore a very lugubrious face upon the occasion Their next business was, if possible, to repair the damage, which, though great, turned out not to be irreparable. For Malespini, having now dealt with his devils, gave his assistance to the unhappy Aretino until the entire work was restored, and the day of the festival arrived.

The valiant cavaliers now engaged on both sides with the utmost valour, fighting during the greater part of the night by torchlight, and displaying all the terrors of a mock heroic battle and storm by night. The Marquis Pescara had already stretched three heroes on the ground, while a fourth, an unfortunate gentleman of Ferrara, was seized and dragged by the devils into Malespini's hell, where he was put to all kinds of tortures till the place resounded with his cries. Another was thrown headlong down a tremendous precipice to the terror of all the spectators, who imagined he must have infallibly broken his neck; but Pluto had the kindness to receive him upon a bed of feathers, instead of flames In the inferno were exhibited all those extraordinary embellishments with which it is peopled by the poets,—Ixion's wheel, the stone of Sisyphus, Tantalus with his apples, the vulture of the fire-stealer, Cerberus with his three heads, and a variety of other terrific objects Old Charon was extremely busy with his souls, arrayed in every kind of form and dress, with fires and furies in abundance to greet their arrival One of the principal figures was that of Lodovico Gonzaga, brother to the Duke, representing a Cavalier of the Sun, arrayed in white velvet trimmed with rays of fire, and wearing a band of crimson silk lined with gold, saturated with inflammable liquids. Issuing in this dress out of a cave, he set fire to the belt, and instantly appeared enveloped in flames; for him alone being reserved the glory of giving freedom to the captives enchanted in the den of Apollidone and Grimanessa, an exploit that crowned the wonders of the scene But a still more strange and serious accident occurred to Malespini than to any of the enchanted persons present For he had ordered a choice selection of wines to be in readiness to refresh the actors and their assistants Now some of these were inadvertently placed among some bottles of very fine aqua-vitæ, mixed with camphor and other ingredients calculated to make a fine display of fireworks, which the devils were to spout out of their mouths and their eyes without injuring any one It happened that Charon in his frequent voyages was intrusted with a quantity of rich dresses and ornaments, esteemed of much more value than the souls whom they adorned, for the better protection of which some of the Duke's guards had been appointed. Observing the number of flasks, and supposing them filled with good wine, as, in truth, many of them were, they took an opportunity as soon as possible of emptying them of their contents. Just then poor Malespini came wandering by with scorched eyebrows, inflamed cheeks, and with little of his mustachios remaining, faint and weary "with excess of toil," and dying of thirst. Imagining that his part was nearly played and the festival almost over, he seized upon one of these fatal flasks, and without further consideration swallowed a great part of it at a single draught. But finding it to be pure aqua-vitæ, he stopped about half way; for he had yet the task of arraying a huge porter in a demon's habiliments, who was to bear in his hand a large machine made of fine linen steeped in spirits, which he was afterwards to set on fire, and it therefore behoved him to husband his strength. In this blaze the demon was to run round the top of a large tower in the city of Pluto, and to precipitate himself thence into the depths of the inferno,

but, seized with a sudden qualm on beholding the place, and hearing the noise and confusion of demons below, which he imagined too nearly resembled the reality, no persuasions or threats could prevail upon him to venture upon the perilous leap. Malespini, determined not to bate a jot of what appertained to his duty on the occasion, when he found that neither force nor entreaties availed, gave him a sound cuff on the side of the head, and resolving not to disappoint the spectators, seized upon his devil's dress, arrayed himself in it, took the blazing machine, and ran with the utmost speed round the great tower; thence, throwing his blazing emblems before him, with the spirit of a real demon he took a flying leap in pursuit of them, thanks to the quantity of brandy he had swallowed, which considerably diminished the height of the tower. Almost every one who beheld him, and even Aretino himself, astonished at the sight, and believing it to be the porter, pronounced him a dead man; but, thanks again, perhaps, to the brandy, our hero sustained no kind of harm. Yet this formed only a part of the grand exhibitions of the evening, the whole of which it would be an idle attempt to describe. The battle of the cavaliers, the enchanted bridge, and the disenchantment of the lovers, would each require a separate story, while the jousts and games that followed, attended by the flower of beauty and the pride of chivalry of all Italy, gave a joyous termination to those happy nuptials, from which no one returned home without some proofs of the munificence of the Duke.

PART II. NOVELLA LXI.

MANY years ago there dwelt in the city of Amalto a certain merchant, who, among his other speculations, was unlucky enough to venture in the matrimonial lottery, and to draw a very bold and artful woman for his wife. Now, his business frequently leading him to a distance from home, the lady was at full liberty to indulge "her love of pleasure and her love of sway," neglecting no opportunity of domineering over her household, and coquetting with the prettiest young fellows she could find. One of these at length became so particular a favourite as to excite the notice of one of the merchant's neighbours, who often amused himself with counting the number of visits paid to her by her gentle cavalier during the husband's absence. He next resolved to add to his amusement by acquainting the poor gentleman with his suspicions, who, expressing all the surprise and concern possible upon the occasion, thanked his friend for his advice, observing that he would take care to provide a remedy. And in order to convince himself the more effectually of what he did not in the least wish to know, he fixed to return suddenly to his own house the very first night he should be supposed to be at a distance. So, to be as good as his word, he feigned a pretty long journey, but retracing his steps towards evening, he went straight to his friend's house, situated just opposite his own, whence he could easily descry the motions of his enemy, if such indeed were lurking about his premises that night. His friend, who

had stationed himself at his side, when he was just on the point of dropping to sleep, about midnight was suddenly roused by an exclamation of horror from the poor merchant, and looking out of the window, beheld the lover standing at his usual station. The door not being immediately opened, the latter took a few turns before the house with an easy and confident air, by no means an auspicious sign in the eyes of our jealous spectator, who pronounced himself to be a very unhappy man. With his friend's advice, therefore, he resolved to employ the following stratagem. After disguising himself as well as he could, he very quietly stepped downstairs, and joining the gentleman upon the terrace, he accosted him in a low tone as follows: "My mistress, signor, knows very well who it is, and has sent me to say, that, fearing her husband's return, she wishes me to introduce you some other way into the house, lest any one should observe you walking before the door." Signor Drudo, believing him of course one of the lady's domestics, consented to accompany him, and upon approaching another entrance, the husband took a key from his pocket, and led the unconscious lover up a back staircase into a room where lay a huge chest. "My mistress begs me to conceal you a few moments in this trunk, signor, until my foolish master goes, when you may depend that she will not delay a moment in coming for you herself, and will give you the best entertainment that the house can afford. So jump in, signor; plenty of room and plenty of air; and you will not have to wait many minutes." Accordingly, with a becoming deference for the lady's orders, the bold youth stepped in, and the husband locking him fast, put the key into his pocket and hastened back again to the house of his friend. "He is caught!" he cried; "the rat is fast in the trap. What will be the best way, think you, of disposing of him?" This soon became a very general question, all his friends and relations being summoned to decide upon it, especially the female portion, who were quite delighted to hear the tidings, having long owed the merchant's wife a grudge for the haughtiness and intolerance of her manners. To add to the publicity of the affair, the lady's parents were roused from their beds in the middle of the night and requested to attend; and even her brothers and sisters, and cousins from the country, were not spared upon the occasion: all being assembled in council to strike the souls of the guilty pair with tenfold awe, confusion, and despair. With this charitable view the whole procession directed their steps towards the house of their victims, while in the meantime the unhappy lover had been rather anxiously awaiting the arrival of his beloved, who on her part was looking as anxiously out of the windows, wondering what could possibly delay him so long, as he was accustomed to anticipate the hour. Hearing footsteps passing in all directions but none approaching near, the poor lover, already half stifled, began to kick and cry out with all his strength, in which he was successful enough to attract the lady's ear in the next apartment, who inquired in a great fright what it was. "It is I, my dear soul," returned a feeble voice; "I am just dead. I wonder you can be so cruel as to keep me here." "Why, how did you get there, in the name of all the saints? It is none of my doing, I am sure." "I do not know," said

the voice, "but your servant put me here by your orders, lest your husband should see me." "O Lord help me, then!" she cried. "I see how it all is; it is my husband's doing. It is all discovered. What, in the name of Heaven, shall we do?" "Let me out by all means," cried the voice, "unless you wish to see me perish." "Oh dear! but my husband has got the key and it is impossible to break it open; besides, he would murder me if I did." "Look for another key, then," said the voice. "That is a good thought; so I will," said the lady; and directing her search very effectually, she hit upon the right key, and was happy enough to liberate her lover.

Once free, after drawing many deep sighs, not for love, but to recover his breathing, he was about to take his leave of the lady and secure his escape while there was yet time, when, seizing him half frantic in her arms, she conjured him not to abandon her alone to death and to dishonour. "But what can be done?" cried he, "how can you contrive to escape?" "Why," said she, "if we could put somebody else into the trunk, there might be some excuse for letting you out." "True," said her lover; "but who can we find to take my place so that I may go, for it is quite time?" "Now I think of it," returned the lady, "there is a young ass in the stable; if you would assist me to get it here, and shut it up in the box!" "Certainly I will do that," replied the lover, though not much flattered at the idea of his successor; "I will do that; and let us go about it quickly." So, having achieved this feat and kissed his fair deliverer tenderly, he ran out of the house; while the lady, having locked up the little donkey, very quietly went to rest. Ere long, however, she was roused by a tremendous noise at the door; all the relations she had in the world were arrived, and she went downstairs to welcome them herself. "Now," cried the enraged husband, rushing in followed by the whole troop, "I will convince you of the truth of all I have said. Go in, go in! and you shall take this vile daughter of yours home with you after we have despatched her wretched paramour before her face!" This they one and all promised him to do, proceeding with lighted torches and drawn swords to the scene of action, and followed at a convenient distance by the women, extremely curious to behold the termination of the tragedy. The lady expressing the utmost astonishment at these proceedings and the strange reception she met with on all hands, her husband, without deigning to reply, lent her a pretty severe box on the ear, a species of compliment which was as eagerly returned. "Mind whom you have to deal with and what you say!" exclaimed the insulted fair one; "do you think I will be thus treated in the presence of my parents?" "Oh, thou vile, abandoned woman!" he returned; "what will you say when I show them your wicked paramour, whom we are going to kill before your face?" and upon this a volley of abuse was launched on her from all sides, not a single one of her friends or relatives joining their voice to hers. "Yes, go on, go on!" she cried; "call me by all the horrid names you please; for I have the satisfaction of knowing that you all lie in your throats; yes, you do, you do! or else you are all stark mad: my husband must have driven you out of your wits." "Let us inquire of this

chest," retorted he; "let us hear what that will say!" "O villain!" cried his wife; "you know I never had the key in my life; and whoever you may have hidden there, I swear I have never had anything to say to him in all my life, and I trust that Heaven will help me, and make my innocence manifest to the world. Yes, and Heaven will interfere, for it is all a vile conspiracy to rob a poor inoffensive and injured woman of her chief crown and jewel, her innocence and honour!"

"Come, no whining!" cried her husband. "I have long known your practices; but I hardly thought that he could have made such a complete hypocrite of you: he seems to have taught you to some purpose indeed! Your time is at length come. I will give such proofs of your depravity! Come along, I am going to open the box. But first, my good friends, have your weapons ready, and draw closer round. Strike sure, and take good care he does not escape; for I can assure you he is a fierce and powerful fellow." "Never fear," they all cried at once; "we will do his business, I think we are a match for him!" and wrapping their mantles around them, and brandishing their swords, they entreated him to proceed. One of them even cried in an insulting tone, "Have you confessed yourself, villain? for you are likely to have no other priests to officiate than ourselves." As the jealous husband was unlocking the trunk, his mother and sisters turned their heads aside, as if desirous of shunning the horrid sight, even the shedding of a wicked adulterer's blood.

With hands and eyes intent upon the approaching slaughter the men of vengeance stood; the box opened, and the ass, uneasy at having been so long confined, got upon his legs, and the better to take his breath, brayed a long and discordant welcome to his friends. Such was the sudden shock he gave them, that some of the spectators fainted; the more fortunate ran away, and great was the terror and confusion before order could be restored. The more devout cried out that it was a miracle sent to prove the innocence of the lady and the wicked design of injuring her reputation; so that with one accord changing the object of their resentment, they began to revile the poor merchant, and accuse him of the most flagitious conduct in attempting to ruin the reputation of his own wife: indeed, had he not quickly sought refuge elsewhere, the lady's brothers would have consigned him to the fate they had prepared for her lover. It was some time before he was again received into favour by the lady and her friends, nor was he ever afterwards known to make the least complaint, although the visits of the lover were so often renewed as to attract the notice of everybody but himself.

Salvuccio Salvucci.

SALVUCCIO SALVUCCI.



Few particulars are to be met with relating to the life and productions of the above author, one of Italy's most rare and scanty novelists. There exist only two of his stories which are known to have been published; though we are informed that, like many other of his contemporaries, he designed to present us with a greater number, the want of which, without some additional claims to superiority in point of quality, is not much to be regretted. Yet, though much inferior to some of his predecessors, he was sufficiently famous about the period in which he wrote to occupy a rank in the list of Italian writers of prose fiction. The earlier copies of his work have long since become extremely rare, though a very exact one is said to have formerly belonged to the Borromeo collection, taken from that of the original edition published at Florence in 1591, which was recently preserved in the Vatican Library at Rome. It likewise formed a portion of the collection of the late Alessandro Gregorio Capponi, in whose catalogue it may be found enumerated.



About the year 1572, during the government of the viceroy of Naples, whose magnificence, whose clemency, and love of justice won the regard of all classes, there was a solemn festival held during carnival, given by his Highness in honour of the numerous dukes and princes who then resorted to the city Towards the conclusion of the banquet, the Prince of Bisignan, whose agreeable and somewhat flattering manners placed him on very familiar terms with the viceroy, taking occasion to applaud his equal sway and his successful prosecution of delinquents, inquired whether he had then in custody any of a very notorious character who were shortly about to expiate their offences with their blood. The viceroy replied in the affirmative, observing there were four of this description, who, the governor had just informed him, were kept in the strictest confinement, daily awaiting the signal of their doom. "Have you any objection," returned the Prince, "to state the respective reasons of their imprisonment?" "None in the world," was the reply; "the first is a doctor of laws, who by the falsification of certain deeds contrived to deprive another of his life and property; the second, a doctor of physic, who was bribed at a high rate to despatch one of his patients somewhat too speedily to the other world; the third, while commanding the fortress of Castello dell' Uovo, took the liberty of defrauding the soldiers of their pay, and was in actual treaty, gentlemen, to deliver up the place to the Turks The last of this precious set, being intrusted with a large sum of money by

various people, secured it for his own purposes, and became bankrupt, setting out from Naples for Constantinople, the grand receptacle for wretches of this description; but he had not the good fortune to get clear even of our coasts." "All these are indeed flagrant instances," observed the Prince, "and deserving of the very severest visitation of the laws. For they may be considered as four of the leading professions in the world, those of the lawyer, the physician, the governor, and the merchant, established, as it were, for the benefit of the community, whereas these villains have converted the sources of existence into poison, and thus become guilty of the most atrocious and least excusable of crimes."

"It is true," replied the viceroy, "and since we are assembled here for the purpose of amusing ourselves, let us in turn consider which of these professions ought to be esteemed the most effectual in the promotion of property, of honour, and of life. And we would first have the opinion of the Duke of Citta Penna; then that of Atri; thirdly, of Amalfi; and last, but not least of all, that of our friend Somma. As supreme umpire in this matter, let us elect our Prince Bisignan; he shall decide which of us judges best as to the utility of *their* respective callings. And in regard to the mischief they produce in the world, and their respective pre-eminence in evil, I should like the good Prince of Salerno to put us right. And understand, friends, there must be no appeal from, and no sort of contradiction to, this supreme jurisdiction of mine." "It is well!" exclaimed the Duke of Citta Penna, "and as your Highness has first requested my humble opinion on this high and important subject, I shall express myself frankly, without wishing to be understood to make particular allusion to any member of these said professions, and gladly referring the errors I may fall into to the wisdom of such of you as will rectify them." "That is well said," interrupted the viceroy, "the question is quite general; we have nothing to do with individuals; they need not be afraid of us, so proceed cheerily with the question!" "I say, then," pursued the Duke, "that keeping the *lucidus ordo* of our argument in view, I mean first to put our lawyer to the bar, as he first made his appearance on the tapis. The rest of you may deal with his successors as you please; but I am determined to have a fling at him. For he is, to say the least of him, a two-edged sword, which can cut very sharply both ways; so much so, that not all the governors, merchants, or physicians in the world are to be in any way compared to him. Behold him pouring forth a tide of learned eloquence in defence of the life, the property, and the honour of some rogue whom he brings off victorious. What is so rascally? Had it not been for him the villain would have got his deserts. And let me add, that if the learned gentleman at once applies his ignorance, of which the world, and especially the world of lawyers, is very full, and his knowledge united, in doing mischief, how great is that mischief, no less to his client than to others, whose very lives it may concern, and whose property or honour are most frequently at stake; while the guilty themselves are often falsely convicted, either through their counsel's ignorance or their wilful consent, insomuch that knowledge itself in the hands of such wretches as these may be compared to a knife in the hands of a madman. In fact, they will often restore the stolen

bacon, as it is said, into the kitchen of the thief, if he possess the dexterity to treat them to a slice, while the poor owner walks empty-handed away"

The Duke of Citta Penna here checking himself, he of Atri next took up the theme, proposing to deal as unceremoniously with the doctor of physic as his precursor had done with the man of law. "It is fit," he continued, "that we deal pretty roundly with a man who mostly prescribes doses of three several qualities to a poor sick wretch at a venture, trusting that so many opposite poisons may probably cancel each other without destroying the patient along with them. It is at best a perilous business, in which so many materials and so many false assurances to help them down are to be swallowed. And for this reason physicians are in many places not to be met with; none, for instance, being found in the Isle of Giappone; and they were banished, in its ancient and best days, from the city of Rome. '*Physician, cure thyself*,' *is in everybody's mouth while they are well and in posses*sion of their judgment, but as the latter declines with their health, they then send for him. 'Do you not perceive, O citizens,' cried a wise Roman, 'that it is for conferring upon us the benefit of death that they require payment?' Our physician, moreover, mostly gives proof of skill in redeeming some vile felon from the jaws of Cerberus, saving, probably, his life and property, both forfeited to the laws, and by this process, against his own confession, he strives to justify his errors by declaring such a wretch worthy of absolution. But though his prescriptions often agree excellently well with rogues, they have quite a different effect upon honest men, and as many of us as henceforward allow ourselves to be carried off, either by ignorance or stratagem—why, I say it is our own fault!"

As he thus concluded, the Duke of Amalfi next prepared, with a cheerful countenance, to handle the merits of the commander, who, he observed, "has a very serious charge confided to him. In the field or in the garrison the lives of thousands are intrusted to his hands, their wealth, their honour, their all, depend upon the skill and probity with which he executes his task. But when he once begins to peculate, to declare a truce with his fidelity and honour, and to treat or to fight on his own bottom, as an author somewhere observes, he is very far from being an honest man Neither friend nor foe can hold his promise good, though he often swears on the faith of a loyal soldier; and this must be sufficient without other instances to signify my opinion, whether you judge it right or wrong."

The Duke of Somma, being the fourth, had now to round off the period of their discourse, which he accomplished in a very polished and complete style. He declared "that the good and trustworthy merchant was, after all, the surest means of conferring life, honour, and riches upon those who showed themselves desirous, as most men were, of acquiring and adding to their worldly state and reputation, as he supplied them upon credit with materials of every description on which to build their own fortunes, and, when his bills became due, also *to add to his*. For the truth is, that ready money cannot always be paid down in hard coin, there being, according to an old saying, 'less honesty, sense, and money in the world than people in general

imagine.' But when the trader or the usurer, impelled by the wicked instigation of mammon and the devil, would by their accursed devices vie with each other in obtaining the crown of unrighteousness, made of gold, they are not at all inferior to the lawyer, the physician, or the commander, in the art of depriving people of their life, their reputation, or their property. There are too many instances occurring every day, more especially among a great trading people, who boast of the superior skill and valour of their mariners, of merchants announcing their failure to the world for the mere purpose of appropriating the property of others, committing fraudulent acts of bankruptcy, and not unfrequently absconding with the money of their employers in their pockets. It is an old Spanish saying, 'Mercante mal arrivato carta vecxa va buscando.' The false trader (I take it), returns to his old trade; till having at length forfeited his reputation with his honesty, poverty follows in their place. Now this same poverty being a sort of foot-cloth for all the world to rub their feet upon, soon becomes so strong and unwholesome, that though it were salted with all the virtues of the earth, it would infallibly smell; insomuch that its very professors, a numerous class, in order to avoid its influence, scruple not to commit the most unjust actions at the risk of ending their days upon a scaffold. At last, when they find there is really no other means of getting rid of a nuisance, situated not only very near, but actually within their dwellings, they prefer rather to leave their earthly tabernacles altogether than bear its daily inconvenience, and thus boldly risk a final adventure upon the sea of eternity. And this is the last argument I can think of to establish my position, that there is not a greater rascal on the face of the earth than a fraudulent merchant, such an one as our good viceroy has probably now in his possession among his other living curiosities."

The treatment of this villanous subject, and the able exposition of its enormities by our ducal orators, were greatly applauded by the rest of the company; yet the viceroy himself was perhaps the loudest in their praise. Turning towards the Prince of Bisignan, "To your Highness," he continued, "I believe it next belongs to give final judgment in this case, from which there must be no appeal, declaring which of the professional parties under consideration is either the most useful or the most prejudicial to the world. And let their merits, in God's name, come first, for we have heard sufficient of their opposite qualities, I imagine, to serve us for some time." The Prince, then, with all due form and ceremony, of which he was an excellent master, commenced his magisterial discourse. "Too grave and weighty, I fear, is the burden you have imposed upon my poor shoulders, though I shall endeavour to bear up under it as stoutly as I can. And the better to observe your injunctions, I shall here beg to introduce the famous story, so beautifully told by Boccaccio, applied to one who, like me, had a very important matter in hand

"The father of a family once happened to be in possession of a certain extraordinary ring, which being left by will, had the power of conferring his whole property on whichever of his sons had the good fortune to wear it after his death, to the exclusion of the rest of his children. In this way it was handed down through several genera-

tions, until it fell to the lot of one who had three sons, all of whom were acquainted with its excellent properties. Being perpetually teased by each of them for the succession, the old gentleman, to avoid their further importunities, sent for a celebrated goldsmith, whom he commissioned to make two more so exactly similar that it became impossible to detect the counterfeit. He then severally presented each son with one of them, observing that if he were wise, and wished to lead a quiet life, he would take care to say nothing about it to his brothers, but that after he was gone he might act as he thought proper. Then very conveniently falling sick, as each of them imagined, not long after the presentation of the gift, the old man took leave of the world. The quarrel he had predicted, and which he had contrived to keep at a distance during his lifetime, now burst forth between the sons, each contending that he was the sole heir, and producing the ring as a testimonial of his claims. Great was their astonishment, and great was likewise the perplexity of the umpire chosen on the occasion to adjust the clashing interests of the claimants; the similarity of the rings would now have puzzled the goldsmith himself; insomuch, that after they were well wearied of the controversy they consented to divide the property into three equal parts. And thus would I do in the very doubtful matter you have proposed to me, for all these professions are so exceedingly useful, that I do not suppose the wisdom of a Solomon could pretend to solve the difficulty, as to which, by its intrinsic excellence, is best entitled to the gratitude of the world." and here he concluded his remarks.

"You have spoken, Prince," exclaimed the viceroy, "in a very satisfactory, and I think a very happy manner. And now let the Prince of Salerno please to settle the rest; for if we may be allowed to infer a wise sentence from the singular prudence and sagacity with which he has conducted all his affairs, we shall not be left in want of one now." "Heaven grant you may not!" returned the Prince; "were the premises true the conclusion might be so likewise, though I shall not take any particular trouble to disclaim the character you have given me at the expense of stultifying myself, aware as I am of greater imperfections than those which my friend Bisignan has attributed to himself. And to avoid, if possible, becoming tedious, I shall follow his example by repeating a story I recollect to have heard from an old countryman of mine, who having frequent business in Norcia, received it from the lips of one of his relations.

"There was a certain Annibal Fini da Urbino, no less distinguished by his capacity in civil than in military affairs, of which, being a liberal-minded man, he had nearly the sole adjustment in Norcia. Finding himself one day less pressed with business than usual, he entered into conversation with several citizens, as he stood in the porch-way of the justice-hall, regarding the conduct of the magistrates and governors of Spoleto. Some praised and some blamed them for the same or opposite qualities; one was too avaricious, another inhuman, and they were all in turn very severely handled in proportion to that love of scandal which is so universally encouraged in the world

"Our friend Annibal, flattering himself that his known liberality and

love of justice had acquired for him the reputation of the most upright judge of Norcia, imagined he should steer clear of the sweeping censure pronounced against the rest of the magistrates, and thus accosted a countryman as he went by: 'Martin, my good fellow, tell me, for the sake of this pretty ducat, which of the magistrates, think you, that has just left the court, has the best character among the people?' Now Martin, who, like most of his countrymen, was at once both as awkward and as cunning as a bear, directly replied with the utmost freedom and readiness, but without anything of the graceful or decorous so much insisted upon by the prince of orators: 'I shall answer you, good Mr. Podesta, as a certain neighbour did a customer who put a very improper kind of question to him. My neighbour happened to be in possession of four beautiful wolf's whelps, one of which a villager had a notion of making his own, and with this view he began to haggle with him for the price, saying, "May I rely upon your pointing out to me which is the best, for I do not like to trust entirely to my own judgment, though I have a shrewd notion which is the best?" Now the peasant, who well knew the savage disposition of such animals to be very much upon a par, only answered with a grin "Thrust your hand into the pannier, my friend, and please yourself, for they are all of the same kidney"'

"With this he slipped the ducat into his pocket and rode grinning away, leaving the magistrate to digest the spleen and venom of the reply as well as he could Pretending that he had got business to despatch elsewhere, he turned directly away, and soon afterwards re-entered the hall

"Now, I shall here presume to make a second application of the good rustic's answer to the very important business before us, and I think it may enable us to solve the difficulty regarding the four professional gentlemen at present in the custody of our excellent viceroy, and who, I take it, are pretty much of the same kidney. So thrust your hand into the pannier," he continued to the viceroy, "and take whichever you like to hang first; for they are all of them such complete proficients in their trade, that not one of them, I am convinced, would yield to the other either in his desire or his capacity of doing evil. It is in vain for us to attempt to discover which is the worst, as it is altogether a most diabolical affair on the part of each. I fancy the father of lies alone would be enabled to inform us satisfactorily of this truth." There was a universal burst of laughter and applause at the close of this speech. their mirth was rapturous and overflowing; nor was their admiration less of the happy manner in which the Duke had extricated himself from the difficulty imposed upon him

The viceroy then finally addressed the company, observing that each of the guests was now at liberty to entertain what opinion he pleased; for that this was, after all, the only plan he knew for arriving at the truth Having said this, he proceeded to close the proceedings, and not long afterwards, with the most exact observance of all due forms and ceremonies strictly enforced at the court, the guests separated for the evening, adjourning to repose their wearied limbs from the toils of the banquet, no less than from those of state, of a still more grave and irksome nature than the former.

Novels by Anonymous Authors.

NOVELS BY ANONYMOUS AUTHORS.

THE following very ingenious novel of Grasso, with two others, by unknown hands, have been in most instances appended to the list of "Novelle Antiche," for the names of whose authors we are equally at a loss. This last circumstance, however, would appear to have been the sole reason for such arrangement; for the production of the novels now under consideration must be referred to a much later period. Yet how much so, and what is the exact time from which they date their origin, remains still a question with Italian critics, leaving much space for controversy as well as for arbitrary distinctions. Nearly all, however, agree in yielding among these the palm of excellence to Grasso, whose delightful confusion and perplexity of mind must be admitted to exceed even the uncertainty of his numerous commentators. "Whether," as is sapiently observed by one of these, "the story is to be esteemed feigned or real, we are at liberty to judge as we please, provided we all agree in its being extremely entertaining." Many have maintained it to be true, no less from the nature of its incidents, so difficult to conceive, than from its general manner; the ease, elegance, and vivacity of its style, its exquisite tone, and probability of incident and connection; all of which breathe the odour of a better age than most of its anonymous companions.

To waive every conjecture respecting the precise period in which they may have originated, the translator is not without sufficient authority for the mode of their arrangement. The authors of some of the most esteemed Italian collections, or *novellieri*, along with the learned Manni, Gualteruzzi, and others, happen to agree in referring them pretty nearly to the same period, and placing them in the same order of chronological succession as they will be found by the reader to hold in the present work.

GRASSO LEGNAIUOLO; OR, THE FAT EBONY CARVER.

ABOUT the year 1409, a company of young Florentines having met one Sunday evening to sup together at the house of their friend, Tommaso de' Pecori, a very good-natured and respectable man, and fond

of good society, the whole party agreed, as soon as they had supped, to draw their chairs sociably round the fire. There, as is usual on such occasions, they began to converse in a pleasant way upon a variety of topics, when one of the guests looking round him, observed, "What can be the reason that we have not the company of Manetto Ammanotini here to-night? Though repeatedly invited, he still refuses to come: it is very strange!" Now, Manetto was by profession a carver in ebony, who had opened a shop in the Piazza San Giovanni, and was considered a very skilful artist in his way; he possessed a very agreeable person and manners, and was about five-and-thirty years of age. Indeed, such was his comely and comfortable appearance that it had acquired for him the name of Grasso Fat, and he was everywhere esteemed one of the most happy, good-tempered fellows in the world, always contributing his full share to the life and spirit of a feast. But this time, either from design or caprice, the ingenious carver was wanting to complete the social comfort of the party. After discussing the matter over and over, they were still at a loss to imagine the reason of his absence. As he had sent no message, they felt a little piqued at it, and the person who had first started the subject said, "I wish we could play him some good trick, were it only to teach him better manners in future" "Yes, but what kind of trick could we play him?" said another; "unless, indeed, we could get him to treat us to a dinner, or something of the kind" Now, there was a certain Philip Brunellesco belonging to the same party, a man well acquainted with Grasso and all his concerns, who, on hearing this, began to ponder a little on the subject And pondering to some purpose, he at length observed, like a clever fellow as he was, "If I thought, gentlemen, I were wicked enough to do it, I could tell you how we might have a noble revenge; oh, such a revenge! by passing off a trick upon him that will make us all laugh for an age to come. What do you think? I have not the least doubt we might persuade him that he was actually metamorphosed, and become quite another person." "Nay, that is impossible!" they all cried at once. "I say not," continued Philip, "if you will only listen and let me explain the whole plan." And this he did in so satisfactory a manner that they one and all agreed to join him in persuading Grasso that he was changed into Matteo, a member of the same party

The ensuing night was accordingly fixed upon for the transformation; when Philip, as being upon the most intimate terms with Grasso, was appointed to go about the time of shutting up shop to visit him. So he went, and after talking with Grasso, as had been agreed upon, for some time, there appeared a little lad running in great haste, who inquired if Signor Brunellesco were there. Philip answered he was, and begged to know what he wanted. "O signor!" said the boy, "you must come immediately, for your mother has met with a sad accident, she is very nearly killed, so you must come home now." With well-feigned grief and alarm, Philip exclaimed, "Good Lord defend us!" and took leave somewhat abruptly of his friend Grasso, who said he would go with him if he thought he could be of any service, for now was the time to show his regard. Somewhat con-

science-smitten, Philip thanked him, saying, "No, not now; but if I want you I will make bold to send for you." Then pretending to hasten homewards, Philip turned the corner of a street leading to Grasso's house, opposite to Santa Reparata, and very unceremoniously picking the lock of the door, he marched in and fastened it behind him so that no one could follow.

Now it happened that Grasso's mother had set off some days before to a little country place at Polerossa, for the purpose of washing linen and such household concerns, and she was expected back again that day. After shutting up his shop, Grasso went sauntering along the Piazza, ruminating on his friend's misfortune; until, finding that it grew late, he concluded that Philip would hardly think of sending for him that night. So he resolved to go home, but was somewhat puzzled on ascending the steps to find that he could not open the door as usual, and after several vain attempts, he supposed it must be locked in the inside, and knocking pretty sharply, he shouted, "Open the door!" thinking that his mother had returned, and for some reason or other had fastened it after her in the inside But at length a voice answered in Grasso's own tone, "Who is there?" and Grasso, a little startled, said, "It is I; let me in." "No," returned the voice; "and I beg, Matteo, that you will go away. I am in great anxiety about a friend of mine, for as I was just now talking in my shop to Philip, there came a messenger in haste to say that his mother was nearly dead, and I am very sorry for him." Philip pretended all the while he said this to take poor Grasso for his friend Matteo; and then, as if turning to Grasso's mother, he continued, "Pray, good mother, let me have my supper; it is really too bad; you ought to have been back two days since, and you come in just at this time of night;" and he went on grumbling and scolding exactly in Grasso's own voice. Still more surprised at this, Grasso now said, "That is very like my own voice; what the deuce can it all mean? Who is it speaking there upstairs? Can it be I? How is it, I wonder? He says Philip was at his shop when he heard his mother was ill, and now he is busy chiding his mother, or my mother Giovanna, I do not know which. Have I lost my senses, or what does it mean?" Then he went down the steps again and shouted up at the windows, when, as had been agreed upon, there passed by his friend Donatello, the sculptor, who said as he went past, "Good night, Matteo, good night! I am going to call upon your friend Grasso, he is just gone home." Grasso was now perfectly bewildered on hearing his friend Donatello address him as Matteo; and turning away, he went into the Piazza San Giovanni, saying to himself, "I will stay here till somebody comes by who can tell me who I really am." He was next met by some officers of police, a bailiff, and a creditor, to whom Matteo, whom, however reluctantly, he now represented, owed a sum of money. "This is the man, this is Matteo; take him—he is my debtor. I have watched him closely, and caught him at last!" cried the creditor; and the officers, laying hands on him, led him away. It was in vain that Grasso, turning towards the creditor, exclaimed, "Why, what have you to do with me? You have mistaken your man!

"very willingly;" and, taking his leave, pursued his way. Friend Grasso, remaining at the window of the prison, began to commune with himself, "Well, at last it is clear that I am no longer Grasso, for I am Matteo, and no one else, with a vengeance. The devil give him good of the change! but what a wretched fate is mine! If I say a word about the matter they will think me mad, and the very beggar lads will laugh at me; and if I fail to explain it a thousand mistakes will occur, like that of yesterday, when I was arrested for him, so that I am in a most awkward dilemma. Well, I must wait for Grasso's arrival, and see what he says when I explain the affair to him." After anxiously looking out for his arrival during many hours in vain, he at length retired from his station to make room for other prisoners who wished to look out. Now, it happened that a certain learned judge had that day been committed to prison for debt, who, though unacquainted with Grasso, observing his forlorn situation and supposing he must be an unhappy debtor, sought to encourage him, saying, "Why, Matteo, you look as melancholy as if you were going to be executed to-morrow, and yet you are only confined for a trifling debt. Come, you ought not to despair; but send for some of your friends or relatives, and try to accommodate matters so that you may shortly get out, instead of fretting yourself to death." Hearing these consolatory words, Grasso resolved to confide the source of his grievance to so kind an adviser, and, drawing him aside, he said, "Though you do not seem to know me, I am well acquainted with you, signor, and the reputation you have acquired. It is this that emboldens me to entrust you with the source of my unhappiness, lest you should imagine that any small debt could produce the agitation in which you saw me. Alas! it is far worse;" and he then proceeded to relate the whole of his adventure, bitterly lamenting, and entreating of him two things, namely, that he would mention it to no other person, and that he would deign to give him some advice as to the course he ought to pursue, adding, "As I know you to be deeply read in those authors who treat of ancient histories, and of every kind of strange events; have you ever met with any case similar to this?" The worthy judge, having heard him out, came at once to the conclusion that the poor man was either insane or the dupe of some trick, such as it really was. He therefore replied that he had read of many instances of persons being changed in this way, and that it was no new thing. "Then," said Grasso, "pray tell me, in case I am become Matteo, who is Matteo now?" The judge replied, "Of course, he must have become Grasso." The latter rejoined, "Well, I should at least wish to see him in order to put this matter a little to rights." In this way they continued conversing together until near the hour of vespers, when Matteo's two brothers made their appearance, and inquired of the prison registrar whether a brother of theirs, named Matteo, was confined there for debt, and to what amount. This man happening to be a particular friend of Tommaso de' Pecori, had been let into the secret, and answered that there was; then pretending to run over a list of names, he added the amount of the sum, along with the creditor's name. "Well," said the brothers, "we wish to speak with him instantly and fix upon some method of payment." So enter-

ing into the prison, they inquired of a man whom they saw standing at the window whether one Matteo was near at hand, begging him to tell him that two of his brothers were come to ransom him, if he would appear. Soon after Grasso made his appearance at the grate, and having saluted them, the eldest of the brothers said, "Ah! Matteo, and has all the advice we have given you gone for nothing? How often we have warned you what would be the result, plunging every day deeper and deeper into debt, while your extravagance never admits of your paying any one! What with gambling and other evil courses, you have never a farthing in the world that you can call your own, and now you reap the fruits of such conduct. Do you think we have not already been involved in sufficient trouble and expense, without adding this to the list of your former follies and extravagances? Let me tell you, that were it not in consideration of our own honour and the anxiety of our mother, we would leave you here to pay the penalty of your sins in order that you might learn better for the future. As it is, we have determined to give you one more trial and pay the amount; warning you, at the same time, that should you repeat the offence, you shall lie and rot here before we will trouble ourselves with you more. Be ready, then, when we call for you about vesper-time, when there will be fewer people abroad; as it is not very pleasant to be seen here every day in consequence of your scandalous proceedings." To this rebuke Grasso replied with the utmost humility, promising to abandon the course he had pursued, and no longer bring disgrace upon his friends by his extravagance. He then entreated that they would be true to the hour, which they said they would observe, and took leave of him.

Grasso then went back, and thus addressed the judge: "Well, this is strange indeed! Matteo's brothers have just been here to inform me they will come and release me in the evening. But," he continued, very much puzzled, "when they take me hence, where shall I go? Certainly not to my own house, because if Grasso lives there, what can I say? He will assuredly believe me mad; for I am sure he must be there, or my mother would have sent before this to say that I was missing, whereas she now thinks I am at home." The judge replied, "Then do not go there, but accompany your brothers (I mean those who called), wherever they please." Thus conversing, evening at length arrived; the brothers made their appearance, pretending that they had accommodated the affair; the gaoler came forward with the prison keys, and, stepping up to the place, said, "Which of you is Matteo?" Grasso, presenting himself, replied, "I am here." The gaoler, narrowly observing him, said, "Your brothers have settled your debt; so go, you are free," at the same time opening the prison door for Grasso and his brothers to pass. Now they resided at Santa Felicita, near the side of San Giorgio, and when they reached home they took Grasso into a room on the ground floor, and bade him to stay there quietly till supper-time: the table was already covered, and there was a good fire. One of them next went to seek for a priest residing at Santa Felicita, a good-looking personage, to whom he said that he came to consult him in confidence, as one neighbour ought

to do with another. "You know there are three brothers of us, one of whom is Matteo, who was yesterday arrested for debt. Such is the impression it appears to have made upon him, that he is gone almost beside himself; and more particularly upon one point; for he thinks he has become another person, a carver in ebony, of the name of Grasso, who has a shop at Santa Reparata; and there seems to be no way of getting it out of his head. We have taken him out of prison and brought him home, confining him to his chamber, lest he should proclaim his folly to the world: for should it once become public he will always have the reputation of it, though he were to become the wisest man in the world. This you very well know, and, for the same reason I am come to entreat that you will consent to accompany me back, and try whether there is any chance of restoring him. Do this, and we shall always consider ourselves greatly indebted to you."

The good priest replied that he would cheerfully attend him, for he was sure that if he could only engage his brother in conversation, he should hit upon some method of restoring him to reason. So they set out together, and on their arrival the priest was instantly introduced to our hero, who rose up on his entrance. "Good evening to you, Matteo," said the former. "Good evening, and good year to you also," said Grasso, "who are you looking for?" The priest answered, "I am come to sit with you a little while," and seating himself, he continued: "Come, sit down by me, Matteo, and I will tell you what I am thinking of. You must know I have been much concerned to hear that you have been arrested, and have taken the thing so much to heart as almost to lose your wits. Among other notions, they tell me that you have got it into your head you are no longer the same Matteo, but are become a certain fellow named Grasso the carver, who keeps a shop at Santa Reparata. Now if this be so, you are much to blame for permitting such a slight reverse of fortune to affect your mind. I have to entreat you will dismiss these whims altogether from your imagination, and attend to your business like other people. By so doing you will please your brothers as well as me, besides doing yourself the greatest service in the world, for if you once let people suspect it, they will never give you credit for being in your senses again. Then rouse yourself; be a man, and scorn to indulge such absurdities any longer." Grasso, hearing the kind and encouraging way in which he spoke, declared that he should be glad to obey him as far as lay in his power, being convinced that it was all meant for his good; and that from that hour he would no longer imagine he was any one else but Matteo, as it was clear he was not. There was one thing, however, that he particularly desired, which was, to have an interview with the real Grasso, in order to set his mind quite at rest. "What then?" said the priest. "I see it is still running in your head; why do you wish to speak with Grasso? It would only be indulging and proclaiming your folly;" and he said so much that the poor man was content to abandon the idea. Then leaving him alone, the priest went to inform the brothers of all that had passed, and shortly taking his leave, he returned to officiate at church.

While the priest had been engaged with our hero, came Philip Brunellesco, bringing with him a certain beverage, which he handed to one of the two brothers, saying, "Take care that you give him this to drink while you are at supper, for it will throw him into so sound a slumber, that you might beat him to a mummy during six hours before he would awake So give it him, and I will return again about five, when we will finish the joke" Accordingly the brothers sat down to sup with our hero, and contrived to make him swallow the whole of the mixture without his perceiving it. After supper Grasso turned towards the fire, and the potion very soon began to operate in such a way that he was no longer able to keep his eyes open; when the brothers, not a little amused, said to him, "Why, Matteo, you are very dull; you are almost asleep!" "True," returned Grasso, "I think I never felt so sleepy in all my life; had I never had a wink of sleep for this month past I could not feel worse. So pray let me go to bed." And it was with some difficulty he was able to get there, and more especially to undress himself, before he fell into a profound slumber, snoring like a pig. Philip, with three of his companions, then made his appearance, and finding him fast asleep, had him laid upon a litter, with all his clothes, and carried to his own house No one being within, his mother not having yet returned from the country, they laid him gently upon his bed, and placed everything exactly in the same order as usual. Next they took the keys of his shop, which they found hanging on a nail in the wall, and going straight to the place, they took all the instruments of his trade they could find and laid them in different positions Planes, saws, hammers, rules, and hatchets, all were turned awry, and confused in such sort as if twenty demons had been puzzling their heads how to produce so much disorder Then shutting up the shop again, they restored the keys to the same place and retired to their own houses to rest. Grasso continued sunk in profound repose the whole night, nor awoke until after matins the next morning. Directly recognising his old spot at Santa Reparata, he gazed through the window and endeavoured to collect his confused thoughts. He felt the utmost astonishment at finding himself in his own house, considering where he lay down the preceding evening "The Lord help me!" he exclaimed as he dressed himself, and took down the keys, proceeding with all haste to inspect his shop "The Lord help me! what a sight is here!" he continued, as he beheld everything out of its place, and began the herculean task of readjusting his different articles in the manner he had left them. At this moment arrived Matteo's brothers, who finding him thus busily engaged, affected not to know him, one of them saying, "Good day, master!" Grasso turning round and recognising them, began to change colour, replying, "Good day and good year, pray whom are you seeking?" "I will tell you," said the other "We happen to have a brother whose name is Matteo, who has latterly become a little odd, and got into his head that he is no longer the same Matteo, but the master of this shop, a man of the name of Grasso. After giving him the best advice we could, the priest of our parish, a very good kind of person, tried to assist us in eradicating this foolish impression from his mind, and we believed

that he was getting better, as he fell into a quiet slumber before we left him But this morning we found that he had absconded: whither he is fled we know not, and we came here to inquire." Grasso seemed quite confounded at this account, and turning towards them, said, "I know nothing of all this, why disturb me with your affairs? Matteo has never been here. If he said he was I, he was guilty of a falsehood, and if I meet with him I intend to tell him so, and learn whether I am he, or he is I, before we part. We are surely all bedevilled within this day or two; why come to me with such a story?" and with this he seized his cloak, and left them in great anger, closing his shop and proceeding towards Santa Reparata, complaining bitterly the whole way. The brothers also went off, while our hero, stopping at the church, began to walk about in great wrath, until he happened to be joined by one of his companions, formerly his fellow-labourer in the same trade of inlaid work under Maestro Pellegrino, a native of Terma. This youth had for some time been settled in Hungary, and managed his affairs so well that he had returned to Florence in order to obtain assistance to execute the numerous commissions he received. Often had he tried to persuade Grasso to accompany him back, by holding out the prospect of his acquiring great wealth; and the moment our hero cast his eyes upon him, he resolved to avail himself of the offer. Hastening towards him, he said, "You have more than once asked me to go with you into Hungary, which I have hitherto refused; but now, from some particular circumstances, as well as a little dispute with my mother, I shall be very happy to return with you. Yet if I am to go, it must be soon, as most probably before to-morrow it might be too late." The young man received this proposal with great joy, and it was arranged that Grasso should immediately proceed to Bologna, where he was to wait for his companion. He accordingly hired a horse and set out for that city, having first left a letter for his mother, informing her of his departure and desiring her to take possession of his property in Florence. The undertakings of the two friends in Hungary prospered so well that they acquired considerable fortunes, and Grasso more than once returned to his native place, and diverted his friends by relating the mysterious adventure of his earlier years.

NOVELLA.

There formerly resided in Desiga, a rich district of Provence, a man of considerable wealth, named Ranieri. Being wholly devoted to traffic, like most merchants he spent a great part of his time in travelling from place to place, and had thus succeeded in realising by his prudence a fortune, which he daily increased. In other matters, however, he displayed by no means the same discretion; for, though united to a very excellent and lovely woman, he had the weakness to attach himself to one of quite an opposite character, upon whom he bestowed a large portion of his wealth, while at the same time he displayed equal

kindness and liberality towards his wife The latter observing him one day preparing for a journey, and laying aside a variety of articles intended as presents for his mistress, and being aware at the same time that his simplicity of character was by no means qualified to cope with female arts, requested of him, with a very serious countenance, that he would have the goodness to bring her back a small purse full of sense, which would give him very little trouble, as he was going to the fair of Troyes, and that even a single pennyworth would be enough. This she said in the hope of awakening him, by a gentle hint, out of the amorous lethargy in which he lay bound. But he, imagining that she alluded to some species of herb or medicine, failed to perceive her drift, and contented himself with assuring her that he would fulfil her wishes

Now, as he ventured not to set out without taking leave likewise of his beloved Mabilia (so the other lady was named), she on her part entreated him to purchase for her a rich and beautiful mantle, and this also he undertook to do. On his arrival, therefore, he proceeded to despatch his business, in order to attend to the commissions of the ladies, and so successful was he in his speculations, that after realising more than he expected, he purchased a variety of rich presents besides the mantle, and was enabled to expedite his return. As he was on the point of setting out he recollected the purse of sense, and inquired of one of his old correspondents on Change where he was most likely to meet with it. The other being very much of the same leaven as his friend, quite a matter-of-fact man, recommended him, in the same serious tone, to apply at an apothecary's shop, believing it must be some kind of herb or spice brought from the Levant The apothecary, with as much simplicity as his customer, assured him that he had none, and referred him to an old Spanish chemist, a little better acquainted with the rare production of which he was in want. Though this tradesman resided at some distance, Ranieri, with a proper regard for his wife's wishes, persevered in his application, and begged to know whether he sold any of this rare article or had any portion of it to spare. The good man, surprised at this singular demand, began to suspect that there must be some deception in the case, if indeed Ranieri himself did not wish to make a fool of him. "There is mischief here," he said to himself, as he began to question our hero more particularly on the point, until he artfully extracted from him a long account of himself and of his fair, discreet young wife, who had desired him to purchase a little sense, while he learned that articles of a very different kind had been purchased for the other lady Upon this account, being a sensible, humane man, and seeing how the affair stood, he began to vend him a little of the article he so much wanted, in the shape of some good advice upon the subject He described in pretty lively colours the folly and injustice of which he had been guilty, in preferring a vile, mercenary creature to the gentle affections of so kind, so judicious, and lovely a wife, sacrificing her peace and happiness for the sake of a blind and illicit passion for another. "And if you wish," continued the kind old man, "to experience the truth of all I have said, only consent to put to the trial their respective affec-

tion and regard for you, which I sincerely advise all such infatuated men to do, and you will soon find which of the two will remain most loyal and faithful to your love"

Ranieri, who had listened very attentively to the old gentleman's discourse, without once interrupting him, or testifying the slightest offence, for the first time began to consider the matter seriously and to feel impressed with the truth of what he had heard. So, taking the good sense offered him by the old Spaniard in good part, he professed himself ready to follow his advice, would he only point out in what way he could satisfy himself as to the different degrees of affection entertained by the wife and the mistress; indeed, nothing would please him better than to put their tempers to the proof. "There can be no difficulty," continued the good Spaniard, "in ascertaining this; only despoil yourself of your gentlemanly attire, assume a very plain, poor dress, and send before you tidings of your complete downfall in the world"—('Heaven forbid!" cried the poor merchant, horrified at the idea)—"then," continued the old man, smiling, "follow them yourself soon afterwards on foot In this plight visit the respective houses of the ladies in question, and I think I may give you permission to take up your residence at that which, of the two, receives you the most kindly and hospitably; but never, if you value your own happiness, visit the other again." Perceiving the kind and judicious nature of this advice, Ranieri promised to obey. he instantly proceeded to the execution of his plan, and instructed his attendants as to all that was necessary for its completion. Setting off alone, he arrived in his poor habiliments about sunset in his own district; and apparently overwhelmed with grief and shame, as if he had barely escaped with life, he knocked at the door of his adored Mabilia. It so happened that the lady being close at hand, came herself to let him in; upon which, in a most alarmed and piteous tone, Ranieri entreated her to grant him an asylum in her house from the rage of his angry creditors, who would not be long in overtaking him. For some time the interested wretch was at a loss to recognise her lover in his poor garb, and stood as if doubtful what to think At length, beholding him in so destitute a condition, and hearing the fatal tidings of his losses as it were confirmed, she at once assumed a bold and arrogant tone, inquired who he was and what he did there, and affected complete ignorance of there being such a person in the world. At the same time she shut the door in his face, and went murmuring away. Such was the sudden shock to the feelings of the poor merchant that it was with difficulty he restrained his rage: he left the place heaping upon her all the reproachful epithets that she so well deserved. With sensations it is impossible to describe, he next proceeded towards his own house, whither the report of his ruin had already preceded him; but the moment the door opened, he felt himself encircled in the arms of his wife, who, mingling consolations with her tears, conducted him into his room, where she had prepared everything for his reception likely to alleviate his woes. Such, indeed, was the sweetness and the kindness of her manner, that the delight he now felt amply repaid him for the disquiet and pain which the opposite conduct of his mistress

friend Niccolo Timucci declared that, good as it was, it was, nevertheless, no way to be compared with the still more ridiculous proofs of simplicity he had at other times given. You must know that this eccentric genius having occasion not long ago to visit Norcia, obtained an introduction to my noble friend Giovanni di Santi, who resides there; and repeating his visits on somewhat too familiar a footing, as I seldom entered my friend's house without finding him there before me, Giovanni at length became almost weary of his strange and wild vagaries, which he humoured with infinite skill, to the admiration of all his guests. In order sometimes to get rid of his company, my friend contrived to employ him in some little commissions; observing, for instance, 'Now pray inquire into that business, my dear Bianco, and let me have an early answer, and you may depend upon it I will make it worth your while, for I see you are not one of that stamp to remain long quiet without meeting with promotion in the world.' 'And what promotion am I likely to get among you people of Norcia?' replied our hero. 'Do you think I do not know your tricks?' 'Know what you will,' rejoined Giovanni, 'but there are some of us who have sworn to leave no stone unturned to have you elected our mayor—the mayor of Norcia; I think this would not sound amiss, my Bianco?' 'It would be something, to be sure,' returned the latter; 'and, to say the least of it, I think I could carry the mace as well as you carry that walking-stick.' 'Very good, Bianco,' said my friend, 'and we shall soon put you to the proof.' 'So much the better, you may do it now, if you please,' cried Bianco, with a very important face, as he hastened to discharge my friend's commission. He had no sooner turned his back, than Giovanni, addressing me with a laugh, 'Well, signor, what do you think of him? Did you ever see a more heavy and conceited ass in your life? Though you see he gives himself credit for an extraordinary degree of shrewdness, he cannot help believing he is to become our mayor at the next election; yet he is scarcely fit to be a constable of the borough. Blockhead as he is, however, I will contrive to make him useful to me in my affairs, flattering him with the hope of his mayoralty, while at the same time I amuse myself with his extravagances.'

"When the time of his departure from our city arrived, Giovanni, having already made him nearly frantic with expectations of the chief magistracy, escorted him with much mock respect, along with a few other friends who were in the secret, several miles, as far as Bagno a Ripoli, and there they took a solemn leave of him, bidding him be of good cheer, for that they were resolved to go through with the business, and prove their zeal in his service. Our hero returned thanks with a very complacent and ceremonious air, not in the least questioning the truth of what was said; and we then measured our way back to the city. The next step proposed was to prepare a letter, as if coming from our friend Giovanni, inviting him to stand candidate at the ensuing election, when he would infallibly be guilty of a thousand fresh absurdities on the occasion. 'There is not the slightest doubt of that!' exclaimed Messer Niccolo. 'Then the sooner we have them the better,' rejoined Messer Antonio, 'and my acquaint-

ance with the Norcian dialect will entitle me to the composition of this precious document.' In fact, the next morning he produced it ready cut and dry, insomuch that any one would have sworn, from its phraseology, that it could have been written nowhere but at Norcia. The tenor of it ran thus: 'The question of your election to the supreme magistracy would now appear to be placed beyond a doubt, as a certain friend of great influence with the council has recently declared in your favour.' This document was regularly copied and signed by a roguish notary, and forthwith despatched to its destination. It was delivered by the messenger into Bianco's hands with a profusion of compliments and ceremonies, and after repeated perusals he took the bearer of it courteously by the hand and invited him in to supper. The messenger then answered all inquiries to our hero's satisfaction, having been well tutored by Giovanni to the task before setting out.

"The ensuing day he returned in triumph with the expected answer, which Niccolo read aloud to us with a very business-like air and much mock solemnity. It was just what we could have wished; he accepted the nomination, returning thanks to the good burgesses for this gratifying proof of their regard. To witness the progress of his extravagance, we next resolved to send a deputation of gentlemen to wait upon him at the public prison, where he officiated as a sort of contractor with the poorer debtors for their ransom, at a certain exorbitant interest. We found him treating with them for terms in a most ludicrous manner, interrupting himself at every other word with a triumphant assurance that he should shortly be altogether freed from their impertinent solicitations and obstinate folly. 'Away,' he cried, 'in the course of another month we shall see whether I am somebody or no.' And this was followed by such a medley of similar expressions, that, finding him much worse than we had expected, we agreed that there could be no hazard in advancing boldly to the point. For this purpose we indited a fresh epistle, still in the name of the said Giovanni, and further despatched by the hand of the same courier, containing the actual tidings of his election, and stating that a more formal annunciation of the whole affair would speedily follow. Until that time, it alluded to the propriety of keeping the matter secret, as it ought to be most formally announced both to the public and his familiar friends.

"This soon brought a still more glorious answer than before, so complete a specimen, indeed, of the burlesque, that we resolved to put a finish to the scheme. The mock election took place at the house of Ser Niccolo, the votes were regularly entered, and the great corporation seal attached to the letter, signed by the common council, announcing the official intelligence of our hero's election. The courier was then commissioned to repair to the new magistrate and request him to hold himself in readiness at Pergola, three miles from Norcia, on the 24th day of July, where he was to await the arrival of the colours, the dresses, and all the 'pomp and circumstance' of election. This duty the courier discharged in the best style possible, for, pulling off his hat, streaming with ribbons, with his face full of happy news, he delivered the great seal with the most reverential air, wishing the new magistrate joy at a humble distance. Having perused it for a full hour, he began

to give vent to his overcharged feelings by a thousand ridiculous acts and gestures. He presented the courier with a handsome sum, with the promise of a further reward when he took the magisterial chair at Norcia. He then hastened back to a party with whom he had supped as usual, and bursting upon them, not far from the spot where we stood to enjoy the scene, he exclaimed in a hurried manner, 'Well, gentlemen, the time is at length come when you are to know the extent of my influence and reputation in the world.' 'Why, what has happened?' inquired his companions; 'have you heard anything new?' 'I am inclined to think this is new,' returned our hero, displaying the credentials of his election. 'If this does not lie, we shall soon see whether I know how to carry a staff of office as well as my predecessors. The truth is, gentlemen, I have just been elected mayor of Norcia;' and this he tried to confirm by a thousand extravagances, occasioned by the contradictions with which they purposely provoked him. Then, in a violent heat, approaching the place where we stood, he took Ser Niccolo to witness whether our friend Giovanni had not promised and obtained for him the high situation he alluded to. 'Faith, I believe it must be so,' cried Ser Niccolo as he perused the letter; 'he only tells you the truth, my good fellows, and if you are wise, you will bestow upon a man of his influence and importance every attention in your power.' The whole company then vied with each other in doing honour to him, entreating that they might be admitted as part of his escort when he should set out to enter on his new office. So our hero departed home to make suitable preparations, and then called on all his acquaintance, with the great seal always in his hand, observing he came to take leave as he was shortly about to enter upon a new career. Great were the doubts and controversies which arose among his friends in Florence on hearing these tidings; but when they discovered him actually engaged in preparing steeds and colours for his retinue, they almost began to give credit, against the evidence of their better judgment, to the truth of his statements.

"Finding that his ready money was scarcely equal to the magnificence of his ideas, our hero turned his thoughts to the sale of some property situated near the Church of St. Mark, which a certain notary had long been desirous of purchasing. In order to obtain it on more easy terms, the notary began to flatter him with his splendid preparations and magnificent prospects, observing that he emulated the noblest of his ancestors, the house of Alfani having always distinguished itself for its liberality in its public exhibitions and offices 'And since it will be an accommodation to you in your new affairs, I shall be proud to offer you what I once mentioned, though, should any of your other friends be enabled to give you more, you had perhaps better not think of my proposal.' But our hero immediately jumped at this offer, and forthwith received an order on the bank of Esau Martellini for the amount agreed upon. The whole of this was speedily employed in completing his outfit on this solemn occasion, having to provide, according to the tenor of his instructions, no less than a judge, a knight, and a notary to accompany his retinue. Before setting out, applications for minor offices flowed in upon him on all sides, and he made

various promises to his friends, how handsomely he would take care to provide for them.

"On the appointed day he accordingly set forward, the mock constables and other officers preceding him with their staves, while the cavalcade, with our hero at their head, followed with colours spread and trumpets sounding as they proceeded slowly and solemnly along. They first took the road towards Arezzo, and from thence to Castiglione, to Cortona, and to Perugia, at all of which places they visited the chief magistrates, to their infinite surprise and perplexity. Doubtful in what way to act, they nevertheless believed it would be the safest plan to show every proper attention and respect to their countrymen. Leaving Perugia, they next arrived at Pergola, exactly on the 24th day of the month, as had been stipulated for by his friend Giovanni in the credentials. Alighting at the hotel, the host, nearly overwhelmed with the sense of the honour received, lavished abundance of ceremony and respect upon his new guests; but recovering himself a little in the course of the evening, he ventured to inquire what was the governor's destination, as he doubted not, from the magnificence of his preparations, he must be proceeding upon some high destination. Bianco, happening to overhear this inquiry, instantly answered for himself that he was about to assume the chief magistracy of Norcia. The good host, upon this, testified the utmost surprise, and shortly again inquired of one of the attendants whether they meant to jest with him. 'The chief magistrate of Norcia,' he continued, 'is a noble Roman gentleman, elected not more than a fortnight ago.' 'What is that the man mutters there?' exclaimed our hero; 'the simpleton is perhaps talking of the governor, for, as matters at present stand, here is the mayor!' and he grew several inches taller in a moment. And in order to avoid further discussion, he commanded the great seal, with his credentials, to be handed to the unbelieving host. With a thousand apologies for his boldness, he returned the document, expressing himself perfectly satisfied of its truth, though he shrugged up his shoulders as he exclaimed, 'I almost begin to think I see double; the idea of two magistrates has confused me strangely, and perhaps the best way of recovering myself will be to attend to supper.' In great glee at having thus discomfited the poor landlord, Bianco, turning round to his officers, observed. 'There goes a wise head! he has drunk till he has confused the distinction in his own mind between a governor and a lord mayor.'

"But the inquisitive host, still unsatisfied on the subject, had no sooner served up supper, than, leaving his nephew in charge, he mounted a fine blood mare and proceeded post to Norcia, where, alighting at an old friend's house, not quite sure whether he was out of his wits or no, he exclaimed in a tone of anxiety, 'There has the oddest thing in the world happened to me to-night!' and he proceeded to relate what had occurred. The other, bursting into a loud laugh, inquired whether he had really ridden the whole of the way to learn a fact which he was acquainted with before he set out. 'You know as well as I do, you wiseacre, that the mayor was elected the eighth of the month! The man is merely making a fool of you, unless

he happens to be a greater fool than yourself.' 'But how, in the name of all the saints, can that be,' retorted the host, 'when I read a true account of his election?' Thus conversing, they walked towards the piazza, where a number of citizens shortly collecting together, they proceeded to pass their opinions on the matter. Great was the perplexity and wonder of all, and by all he was advised to refer the affair to the consideration of the council, accompanied by them as vouchers to the truth of his statement. Fresh embarrassment here arose among the members of the council, and after vainly puzzling their heads to divine the motives of this strange proceeding, they came to the determination of despatching their president to ascertain the meaning of it. The latter then accompanied the host back, and still guessing and puzzling themselves the whole way, they arrived in haste at the hotel, and calling for lights, they sent in word to our friend Bianco that the president of the council of Norcia requested an interview with him. Believing it to be a deputation to welcome him on his approach, our hero ordered him to be ushered in. Having moved to each other with no little ceremony, Bianco, turning round upon the landlord, observed with much self-complacency, 'Do you think you can now recollect the time when the new mayor was elected?' 'I fear you will begin to doubt as much as myself, signor, very soon,' was the good host's reply. The president had some difficulty in restraining his mirth at this novel scene, but trying to put the most serious face upon it he could, he thus proceeded to address our hero: 'The members of the city council, hearing of your arrival, signor, have commissioned me to inform you that they cannot but testify the utmost surprise at your pretensions to the magistracy of Norcia, the present mayor having been duly elected on the eighth day of this month to the office he now enjoys. They would willingly, therefore, be made acquainted with the motives of this strange proceeding on your part, for which they can in no way account.'

"Such was the astonishment of our hero on hearing these words, that it was with the utmost difficulty he stood the shock, as he inquired in a scarcely audible voice whether it was customary to elect two mayors at Norcia. The president replying in the negative, our disappointed friend imagined that he had been solemnly duped by the good people of Norcia, whom alone he believed capable of such a trick. His surprise and grief were suddenly converted into the fiercest anger and impatience; and handing the president the various letters he had received upon the subject, he inveighed bitterly against the council for refusing to sanction his claims, adding, 'If these letters do not lie, I shall yet live to be mayor of Norcia. Should it indeed turn out that I have been bubbled, either by the people of Norcia or any other people, I will soon let them know where I come from and who I am, and they shall pay pretty dearly for their impertinence; they shall learn it is no jest, and that the Florentines are a very different class of men from some whom they have to deal with. What! Mr President, do you take us for mountaineers? Think you we shall put up with your skits and insults as they do? we who have worsted the Duke of Milan, to say nothing of others who have longer claws than the people of

Norcia. What will my fellow-citizens say, think you, when they learn that you invited me hither to preside over your councils, and then elected another in my place? Suppose I had not come early enough, what, in the devil's name, would they have done then?' The president, beginning to be afraid he might actually become frantic in his presence, attempted various means to pacify him, and proposed to put off the discussion of the case to another time, observing that he would in the meanwhile acquaint the council with the state of the affair; and then retreating behind the host, he mounted his horse as quick as possible and hastened home.

"He informed the members that he was not yet enabled to throw much light on the strange business they had in hand, owing to the eccentric language and conduct of the party concerned; and that it might perhaps be the most satisfactory way to summon him before the council. Having resolved to defer further proceedings for a little while, they learned that our hero was in deep consultation with his mock officers and other waggish friends in what way to proceed, laying the whole blame on the people of Norcia, who had been instigated by the devil to the infernal act of inviting him to become mayor, and electing another in his place. Wearied with disputation and perplexity, all parties at length retired to rest, though our hero could scarcely close his eyes for thinking of the dilemma in which he was, or if he slept, he only dreamed sad and vexatious dreams. The next morning he resumed his journey to the seat of magistracy, where crowds of people were collected to witness the novel sight, the arrival of a second mayor. But the procession was somewhat too lugubrious, as our hero's retinue had fallen sadly away, and he proceeded rather like a whipped criminal than a judge, hanging down his head and looking in every direction but the right one. In this way he alighted at the council hall, announced his arrival, and at the request of the council entered the audience-room, and took a seat near them. Being called upon to explain his business, he rose up as he had been commissioned to do by the pseudo-judge who accompanied him, and addressed the council as follows: 'My lords and gentlemen, it is now about three months since one of your townsmen, a certain Giovanni di Santi, invited me to become a candidate, and actually secured my election for the chief magistracy of your city. I soon after received intelligence of this event, as you will perceive by these letters under your own hand and seal. Desirous of emulating the example of my ancestors in filling the most honourable offices, as I have been informed they did, I resolved to take upon myself the burden of duties and honours I imagined you had prepared for me. For this purpose I made the most splendid preparations, according to the usual custom, to enter upon my new dignity in a becoming manner, attended by a retinue which it required many hundred crowns to equip, as you may well imagine. What was my surprise, what my indignation, then, to learn from the master of an hotel the strange news, soon after confirmed by your own president, that you had elected another officer in my place! I am grieved to say that such a proceeding is scarcely compatible with the honour and fidelity to be expected from a com-

munity like yours. Neither is it agreeable to the alliance at present subsisting between the Florentines and your own city; nor have you, as you perhaps think, imposed upon one of plebeian rank. No, gentlemen; you will be shocked when I declare that you have attempted to cast a slur upon the fair name of one of the respectable members of the honourable house of Alfani, a house, gentlemen, the most ancient and grand of our whole city, insomuch that you may justly dread the vengeance of Heaven, which will not fail to overtake you. Yet, perhaps, if you will be prevailed upon to act a fair and honourable part, to dismiss your present magistrate and place me in his seat, to heal the wounds my reputation has suffered, and reimburse me for my various expenses, I and my house may probably be induced to bury in oblivion what has already passed. Thus, gentlemen, and thus only will you properly consult mine and your own honour, for here I hold the document received from the hands of your deputation. Are you prepared to put in force its articles?' Strangely bewildered by this specimen of the mad oratory of our hero, the whole council rose, somewhat anxious for their personal security, while the president proceeded to answer his complaint in the most mild and soothing terms he could select for the purpose: 'May it please you, most lofty and flourishing branch of the noble stock of the very honourable house of Alfani, may it please you to deign to retire for a few moments, while our council proceeds to debate the important question you have just laid before us.' Our hero then retiring, with no little ceremony on both sides, the good common council-men proceeded to examine, with anxious brows, the nature of the documents just submitted to their notice. What was their surprise and mirth at beholding this wretched forgery, a false copy of their own forms and ceremonies of election, but written neither by the hand of their president nor sealed with their corporate seal. The judge, the knight, the men-at-arms, were all of the wicked Giovanni's own creation. Upon this the members unanimously declared our poor hero to have been solemnly burlesqued, in the true style of the mock heroic; and having indulged their mirth for some time, and commanded several constables to be in waiting in case of need, they ventured to recall the ex-mayor to give him his dismissal. On his appearance the president again addressed him: 'Most noble sir, the sitting council has commissioned me to express the deepest concern on discovering the gross imposition which has been practised upon you in forging the papers which you have here submitted to their perusal. There never, I am sorry to observe, was the least idea entertained of inviting you to take upon yourself the duties of our magistracy, neither are the papers sealed with our seal nor written in the form of our elections. Understanding you are sprung from an ancient and noble family, our council sincerely condoles with you on the loss either of reputation or of property which you may possibly incur through the scandalous and unprovoked treatment you have received. We wish it were in our power to prevent your suffering in either, no less out of regard to your own person than to the city to which you belong. But we are sorry to have to state that we have not at present a single office vacant, with which we should

otherwise be most happy to present you. Under these circumstances we would presume to advise' (for the constables were now at hand) 'that you should, as soon as possible, think of returning to your own home; and consulting, as far as possible, your own reputation, which cannot but suffer by prolonging the discussion of this affair, no longer give yourself any uneasiness at what has passed.' On hearing the termination of this address, so contrary to his ambitious views, our unhappy hero appeared quite thunderstruck; it was so heavy a blow that it totally upset the arrogance and extravagance he had formerly shown. 'My good lords and gentlemen,' he exclaimed, with the tears starting into his eyes, 'I begin to fear I have been sadly over-reached, and all by that arrant knave and traitor Giovanni di Santi, as a return for the good services I rendered him in Florence. Behold! I have here letters under his own hand; send for him—pray send for him directly, and first compel him to make me compensation for all my losses; for as to the rest of the injury, I think, with the help of my friends and brothers, he will never be inclined to repeat the joke.' 'Only convict him of it,' replied the president, 'and we will take care that he make you most ample reparation, besides giving him such chastisement as shall leave you little trouble in the way of taking revenge.' The rogue was accordingly summoned, a crowd of citizens following, inquisitive to learn the new magistrate's fate. When he met his friend Bianco face to face, he testified the greatest surprise, as if he were shocked on beholding him there, and when the cause of his arrest was explained, with a very sharp inquiry into the motives of so shameful an imposition, the prisoner only expressed still greater surprise, observing. 'It is true, my lords, that when I was in office at Florence, I received certain favours at the hands of my friend Bianco, here before you; for which, feeling truly grateful, I should have been happy to serve him by every means in my power. Something of the kind I also expressed in his presence, adding, that I thought him every way calculated to adorn so eminent a station as the chief magistracy of Norcia, and that I could have wished I had influence to procure it for him. But from that period to the present, I wish I may lose my head if I ever heard a single syllable on the subject.' Bianco upon this immediately confronted him with the letter, saying, 'Now, my lords, we shall see with what face he will venture to deny this.' Without the least hesitation the prisoner denied its being his production, and bringing a host of noble witnesses to back his assertions, the council, however reluctantly, was compelled to set him free. The sole remuneration our poor hero obtained was the expenses of his procession, which, out of pure compassion, the council at length consented to discharge.

"He then walked out of the hall, accompanied by his false friend, Giovanni, attracting the admiration and curiosity of all the people wherever he passed. The wicked author of the plot had the dexterity further to impose upon him, condoling with him on the very unlucky occurrence, and expressing his desire of punishing the perpetrators of so vile a forgery, who presumed to make use of his name in order to ruin him with his best friend. On reaching the inn, then, our hero

took a hearty leave of his best friend, and journeyed on his way towards Perugia, followed by the sham judge, the knight, and the notary, all of whom had been hired for the occasion. Not having yet received the due reward for their occupation of such dignified stations, and aware that the enterprise had miscarried, they began to murmur, and unable to obtain satisfaction, they resolved, without further ceremony, by the advice of the notary, to make seizure of the ex-mayor's effects, the remnants of his splendid preparations for the procession. At his next stage, steeds, trunks, and trappings were laid under sequestration by virtue of a pretended writ which the false notary served upon our unfortunate hero, in spite of his earnest prayers and entreaties to retain them, that he might re-enter his native city as honourably attended as he possibly could The sole property left him was his coat of arms, his banner, and his lance, which he carried on his shoulders to Arezzo."

Novels of Maiolino Bisaccioni.

MAIOLINO BISACCIONI.[1]



ONE of the most distinguished characters who flourished during the close of the sixteenth and the earlier part of the seventeenth centuries, no less remarkable for the eminence than for the diversity of his talents. Though both a very voluminous and esteemed author, he was also a soldier and a man of the world, and still more celebrated, according to Tiraboschi, for his adventures than for his writings. Yet there were few subjects upon which he did not exercise his pen, in addition to his claims as a writer of fiction, in which he appears to greater advantage than most of his contemporaries. In history, biography, controversial criticism, and the drama, his productions are very numerous as well as respectable, a fact of which we should be sorry to convince our readers by presenting them with the entire critical list of his works appended to his memoirs, as furnished by the learned and voluminous Mazzuchelli. From him we learn[2] that the subject of our remarks was born at Ferrara in the year 1582, the son of Giralamo Bisaccioni and Lucia Trotti, both sprung from ancient families belonging to the city of Jesi, though by some falsely supposed of Venetian origin. His career was a tissue of adventures, resembling rather the incidents of one of his own romances than the probable events of life, and highly deserving of more particular elucidation. He pursued his early studies at Bologna, equally devoting himself to polite letters and to law, in which last he obtained a doctor's degree. But his natural vivacity and love of enterprise were not long to be restrained within the precincts of a college. He applied himself to military tactics, wrote upon the subject; and when little more than sixteen entered into the service of the Venetian republic, conducting his first campaigns under the Count di Fuentes, Governor of Milan. While stationed at the fortress of Orgi Nuovi, in the state of Brescia, he fought in single combat a veteran captain of the name of Domenico Cresti. In 1601 he was at the siege of Canisca, a city bordering on the Hungarian territories, where, under the command of his uncle, at the head of the Pontifical troops, he gave several striking proofs of his skill and bravery. Upon his return to Italy in 1603, he engaged in another duel with Alessandro Gonzaga, his commander, and being expelled in consequence from the ecclesiastical state, he retired into the Duchy

[1] Il Porto, Novelle più vere, che finte. In Venezia, per gli Eredi di Francesco Scorti, 1664, 12mo. Sono XII Novelle che si fingono raccontate da alcuni Passageri sopra una nave mentre questa era vicina per entrare in *porto*.

[2] Scrittori d'Italia, tom. ii. pp. 11, 12, 64.

of Modena, where he availed himself of his legal talents, attaining, in the year 1610, to the office of Podesta at Baiso, in which he conciliated the esteem of the lords of Scandiano. Unfortunately, however, he was there accused, before the Duke, of having aimed a musket-shot at a certain Dominican, a charge upon which he was thrown into prison; but his innocence being proved, he received additional favour and promotion from the Duke. Soon after he united a military and civil jurisdiction under the Prince of Correggio, who likewise honoured him with his friendship. This, nevertheless, if we are to credit his own letters, did not prevent a duel taking place between the Prince and himself, as he appears always to have made a merit of fighting with his commanders. At this period he wrote his famous libel against Fulvio Testi, equally scurrilous and rare. Entering next into the army of the Prince of Moldavia, he rose to the rank of lieutenant-general, and was present at the famous defence of the bridge of Vienna, where, with Count Bucoy and only five others, he sustained a furious attack of the enemy until the arrival of fresh aid.

In the year 1622 he executed several diplomatic commissions of great importance under the pontificate of Gregory XV.; and while at Naples he was elected a member of the academy of the Oziosi, or idlers, an honour to which he could lay little claim Subsequently he was employed as a minister and ambassador at different courts, in all which he greatly distinguished himself, besides finding time to fight two more duels and to compose the volume of novels which has afforded us the pleasure of doing some justice to his manifold merits, and presenting the reader with a specimen or two. Their author died in the year 1663, in an academy entitled Degli Incogniti, of which he was a member; and, though enjoying the title of a marquess, according to Mazzuchelli, by the ingratitude of princes fell a victim to neglect and penury.

NOVELLA IX.

We can scarcely, perhaps, bestow too great praise upon the noble and generous example of Silonia, a daughter of Leonidas, king of Sparta, who preferred sharing the fortunes of her husband, Cleombrotus, to all the admiration, the flattery, and the delights of her father's court. Though he was an exile, a traitor, and justly punished as the unlawful usurper of her father's throne, yet she never deserted his side; she partook his hardships, she relieved his sorrows, and remained constant when all he had in the world besides had failed him Nor a less memorable instance is that which occurred during the unhappy feuds occasioned by the Guelfs and Ghibellines in Italy. It was then that Rolando Crescenzi, a partisan of the Imperial faction, being banished from his native city of Verona on account of having killed one of the Monticoli, a principal leader of the Ghibellines, in the same cause, from some motives of private revenge, was induced, in order to obtain employment, to join the party of the Guelfs; for it was impos

sible indeed that he could ever more be reconciled to the friends of the Monticoli; while the Guelfs on their part did everything in their power to secure so brave an ally in their interests, proposing, among the rest, to confer upon him the hand of the beautiful Eufemia, daughter of Pietro Maladura, one of the chiefs of the Sambonifacci, and the most renowned member of the faction he served. But it was long before Rolando could prevail with himself to renounce all his former ties, his kindred, and the cause to which he had been devoted from his birth, however much he was stung by the reflection that he had been sacrificed, even by his own relatives, to satisfy the vengeance of the Monticoli for the loss of their kinsman, whom he had slain hand to hand. These last reasons, however, acquiring force from the sight of the charming Eufemia, no less than from the circumstances in which he was placed, he boldly took the proffered oath, and sealed his fidelity to the new cause by his nuptials with the fair girl These were celebrated with the utmost pomp and festivity, the Guelfs boasting that they had, for the first time, converted a Jew to the true faith, while the Ghibellines, among whom his relations hung their heads with grief and shame, were loud in their threats of indignation and revenge. A heavy price was put upon his head, and their fury was at its height when they found that he had accompanied Azzo, Marquess D'Este, in his attack upon Verona, in which he had chased the Monticoli out of the place before him

Even when there was a prospect of some accommodation between the parties, it was stipulated by Messer Marino Zeno, Podesta of Verona, that Rolando, as cut off from all reconciliation, should not be included in it, a proposal which the Sambonifacci, much to their honour, rejected, refusing thus to abandon their new friend The most unbounded attachment and confidence subsisted likewise between the lovely Eufemia and her consort, and such was her affection, that she even insisted upon accompanying him in his campaigns. On their return into Verona, the Guelfs elected the Count Ricciardo Sambonifaccio for their Podesta, and soon after they were involved in a war against Salinguerra, Podesta of Ferrara, undertaken by the latter at the instigation of his brother. His name was Rinaldo, and he had formerly indulged a passion for the fair Eufemia while staying at Verona, and had offered her his hand, which was refused on account of his connection with the Ghibellines. When he heard, however, that she had been bestowed upon one of the same party, his rage knew no bounds, he left no means untried to inflame the leaders of the Ghibellines against the people of Verona, and disguising his private animosity, as too frequently happens, under public motives, he succeeded in raising many armed bands, which he united to the forces of the Ghibellines With these he marched towards Verona, and, after several warm engagements, with variable success, the army of the Guelfs was routed in a general conflict, and many of the chief leaders and gentlemen of Verona, together with the beautiful Eufemia, were carried prisoners into the enemy's camp. Though Rolando made the most desperate efforts to turn the fortune of the day, he was overpowered by numbers and compelled to fly; while his foe, returning

with his fair prize to Ferrara, immediately repaired to the palace of his brother, the Podesta. There, on delivering an account of the prisoners, he informed him that he had only one favour to ask, which, without requiring to know it, Salinguerra very easily granted him. Rinaldo then acquainted him with his capture of Eufemia, upon which his brother, suddenly changing his tone, begged to remind him of the possibility of a treaty at some future period with the Veronese, and that therefore they ought to conduct themselves with caution; that he would willingly intrust him with the care of all the prisoners, provided he would be at any time prepared to make exchange or restitution when their names were called over. "Impose what conditions you please," replied the wily Rinaldo, fearful lest his brother should penetrate into his motives; "only grant me the favour I request" "On the condition," rejoined Salinguerra, "of permitting me to behold the person whom you wish to retain." "There is no necessity for that," said his brother "But I must insist upon that, Rinaldo; it is my bounden duty, in the office I fill, to myself and to the people. I cannot and will not dispense with it." Rinaldo was, upon this, compelled to bring forward the beautiful Eufemia, who immediately fell at Salinguerra's feet, crying, "Have pity on me, noble lord! have pity on the most unfortunate of captives! I know it is my duty to submit; but surely courtesy and honour are not banished from your breast. Let the vanquished appeal not in vain to the victor, or give me death, rather than yield me a slave into any hands save those of the public; for my noble friends would rather see me dead before their eyes than intrusted to any private charge." Affected by the grief which she manifested, Salinguerra, turning towards his brother, said, "It is true I gave my promise that you should reserve for yourself one of the prisoners; but in regard to this young lady, I trust you will not think I forfeit it when I say that I dare not permit you to retain possession of her, nor can I surmise how she should have been found in the company of heroes in the field. If nobly sharing the fortunes of a lover or a husband, her claims to our protection must be held sacred. Besides, you have in part deceived me in your representations. No, Rinaldo, I cannot venture to give you unlimited power over her." Embracing his knees, the sweet lady could only weep her thanks, while the rising colour and the flashing eye told the ill-suppressed rage which shook the soul of his brother. "Do you doubt me?" he cried; "do you tell me to my face that you dare to doubt her safety or my honour? Then I swear I will not be juggled out of my just rights · I will have them; I will hold you to your promise She is mine by the laws of war. I took her bearing arms, with my own hand I took her captive, at the side of her husband. And recollect, Salinguerra, that your command here does not extend beyond the bounds of justice; she is mine, I say, to liberate or to exchange, according to the fortune of war, and I will allow no man to interfere. Dare to retain her, and I will appeal to the justice of our courts, and should they fail me, I will enforce my own rights," laying his hand upon his sword, "as I have before enforced them" "It is well," replied Salinguerra, "that you are in love, and are my brother, and may therefore use as many warm words as you please;

but, at the same time, I am chief magistrate here, and as such, young signor, must exact your obedience. If you feel yourself aggrieved in consequence, you may appeal to the commune of Ferrara, just alike to all." And at this moment, when Rinaldo's passion nearly choked his words, a trumpet was heard at the palace gate, and an immediate audience was requested of the Podesta. "To the most mighty military champion and upright judge of this city, Rolando Crescenzi, noble citizen of Verona, sends greeting, with the authority of Count Ricciardo Sambonifaccio, Podesta, to learn by word of mouth from the present messenger whether among the noble Veronese prisoners is to be found a lady named Eufemia, daughter of Pietro Maladura, who, bravely sharing her husband's misfortunes and following him into the field, is supposed to have been taken captive by his enemies. Her wounded husband, unable to afford her succour, now sends, offering worthy exchange or ransom, nothing doubting to obtain justice from the courtesy of brave cavaliers, who war not against women, and who nobly bury private feuds in the public laws of honour and humanity. He, moreover, doubts not but she will in the meanwhile be treated with all the respect and tenderness due to her sex and station, respected even by the most barbarous nations in the world." To this embassy Salinguerra replied, "Go, return to those that sent you; say that the lady is in good hands, and will be cherished and honoured as such a lady ought to be; that, moreover, the Podesta will shortly take measures with the council to fix upon her ransom or exchange, not having at this time ascertained what number and quality of his own party remain in your hands. You may now see and speak with the lady, who will afterwards be intrusted to the hands of one of the most honourable matrons in the city." While Eufemia was engaged with the messenger, Salinguerra, turning towards his brother, said in a mild and conciliatory tone, "You see, dear Rinaldo, this is no question of a mere girl and a common love affair. The lady is the wife of a noble cavalier related to one of the first families in Verona; and you ought never, knowing such to be the fact, to have requested me to yield her to you, a step which would have drawn down equal infamy upon you and upon her husband. Though he be our enemy, he is a public enemy, and he is no longer your rival, inasmuch as her father, after refusing your suit, has conferred her upon another." Rinaldo was silent, but rage and disappointment were struggling in his breast, as he turned away with an expression of contempt and indignation.

In the meantime Eufemia, having tenderly inquired after her consort's health, his wounds, and what were the exact words he had sent to her, dismissed his messenger with the following tender remembrances. "Tell my dear lord the joy you have here witnessed on our hearing that he was safe and likely to do well. Say, that under all our misfortunes, the good wishes of our fellow-citizens are with us; that for his sake I will patiently bear my captivity; and that I never cease to think of him, and to pray for him, trusting to rejoin him soon."

At these words, Rinaldo, biting his lips with bitter jealousy and rage, rushed out of the palace; while Salinguerra, ordering the rest of the prisoners to be properly disposed of, assigned apartments to Eufemia

country, you will consult with your colleagues and the whole commune, and unite in opposing the Podesta's design of delivering her up with the other prisoners, without adequate concessions on the part of the Guelfs."

When he ceased, the citizens expressed their gratitude for the kind interest he took in their concerns, pledging themselves to make effectual opposition to the policy of his brother, and refuse their consent to the delivery of the prisoners. Having assembled the council, therefore, M. Tedele il Nasillo proposed that no exchange or ransom of prisoners should take place without the general consent of the commune; and such was the influence of the rest of his party, that it was carried in spite of the opposition made by the friends of the Podesta. The latter thus found himself unable to proceed with the negotiation entered into with the Veronese, and he complained bitterly against Nasillo and the withdrawing of the confidence reposed in him by the council. But it was in vain that he now made his appeal; suspicions respecting his motives had been excited, and a popular feeling against his measures was studiously kept up. He was reminded that his office would soon expire, that he would not be permitted to cast imputations upon the commune, and that he must submit his further measures to the revision of the council.

In this way, just as he had concluded to deliver up the beautiful Eufemia to her friends, he found his hands tied, and he had the additional mortification of being accused by them of having forfeited his promise. In the meanwhile Tarquinio had already succeeded in obtaining the ear of her favourite maid Bianca, and, unknown to her noble mistress, had contrived, in several secret interviews, to possess himself of her affections. This he soon followed up by solemn promises of marriage, until, having at length acquired sufficient influence, he prevailed upon her, under threats of deserting her, to enter into his interests, and to forward his employer's views of carrying off the beautiful Eufemia. Whatever reluctance and horror she expressed at the design, she was nevertheless shortly compelled, as the slave and victim of her tyrannical master, to obey the directions which he chose to give. It was resolved, then, that she should do all in her power to persuade Eufemia that her liberty was near at hand, while Rinaldo himself was to counterfeit an order from his brother to the captain of the guard, commanding him to deliver up certain of the prisoners to be conducted under military escort, together with Eufemia, who, at the sight of her fellow-citizens, might thus be induced to put herself under their protection. It was further agreed that they should be taken to the quarters of Rinaldo, near one of the city gates, under his custody. With this view, when everything was arranged, at the appointed hour he despatched one of his own captains, in whom he knew he could confide, at the head of a company, along with some other prisoners, to the residence of Donna Lavinia. She was prepared to expect their arrival, the officer displayed his commission as if appointed by the Podesta, and the false Bianca stood in waiting, the ready instrument of their imposture, to encourage her young mistress, in order more surely to betray her into the hands of her destroyers.

Observing also the Veronese prisoners, she did not offer the slightest resistance, being told that they were to accompany her to Verona, where they were to be exchanged for other prisoners of rank; and her kind hostess, feeling assured of her safety under such an escort, took a tender farewell, and consigned her fair guest to their care. Departing, then, in company with Bianca, about nightfall, they soon arrived at the city gate, whence, as soon as he had heard of the success of his project, Rinaldo, with his creature Tarquinio, had just before set out, intending to join the prisoners on the road. Thus, apparently surrounded by her friends, the lady was led forth, the bridge was ordered to be raised, the gates to be closed, and the victim of treachery was consigned into the power of her husband's bitterest foe. Having joined the party a few miles distant from the city, they proceeded under his orders at a rapid pace with a view of reaching his castle beyond Vanguardia, although it was now nearly midnight. The scenery around was often strikingly grand and beautiful; the moon had risen in her full splendour: Eufemia was absorbed in tender thoughts of a reunion with her friends, but Rinaldo felt no touches of compassion or remorse. They had now arrived on the outskirts of his own domain, where, leaving the great road towards Verona, the lady was to be torn from her fellow-prisoners, and borne to the fatal castle, which already appeared in view. The rest were to proceed forwards to Verona; and, without a word being spoken, they were preparing to turn into a new path, when the sound of horses' feet in another direction was heard fast approaching. Not being in the least apprehensive of danger from the side of Verona, as that state was on the eve of concluding a treaty with the Ferrarese, and confident in his numbers, Rinaldo commanded the party to halt. Finding the road lined with a band of armed troopers, they drew up at their leader's voice, who advanced to parley with the opposite chief. Rinaldo likewise advanced, and what were his feelings, on lifting up his vizor, to confront the husband of his intended victim on that very spot! For a moment they gazed earnestly upon each other, when Rolando beginning the first to speak, they were interrupted by a cry of joyful surprise. "That is my wife's voice," exclaimed Rolando; "let me hasten to her:" and supposing she was under an honourable escort intended to convey her to her friends, he stretched forth his hand with an expression of the utmost gratitude towards Rinaldo and prepared to pass by. But he was soon wofully undeceived, for the latter ordering a charge, and the next moment drawing his sword, dealt him a severe blow, which bent him to his saddle-bow, while his party commenced a ferocious attack. It was received with unshrinking courage and resolution by the companions of Rolando, exasperated at beholding the savage and uncourteous action of his enemy, and a fierce struggle ensued by the light of the moon for the possession of the road. There were nearly one hundred men engaged on each side, and as the conflict became warmer, Rinaldo commanded his captain to bear Eufemia to the castle, an order which seemed to redouble the courage and the exertions of the other party, by this time headed by Rolando, taking ample revenge for the insult he had suffered, and goaded almost to madness

at the sight of the troopers bearing their beauteous prize away. He had now nearly reached the spot where she was, and Rinaldo's band receded farther and farther, until at length they wavered and gave way. Still Rinaldo attempted to make head, in order to give time to secure his prize; but Rolando, retreating a short way to obtain ground, returned at a gallant charge, and breaking through the midst of them, overtook the captive lady before they had yet borne her into the castle, the gates of which were thrown open at his approach, it being the hour when Rinaldo was expected. He entered, then, and took possession of his enemy's castle, already prepared as the scene of his own dishonour, and here for the first time his beloved Eufemia, recovered from the anguish of her fears, fell upon his neck and wept. But they were not bitter tears, for love, honour, and happiness were now hers, restored to her when on the very brink of destruction, and doubly cherished from being enjoyed in the intended scene of her disgrace. But what were the feelings of rage and disappointment on the side of Rinaldo, on returning with his scattered troops, and finding himself debarred from entrance into his own castle, now in full possession of his enemy, along with the prize for which he had risked so much. In vain did he summon the warder and the watch; in vain did he lead his men forward to the attack, his rival was too powerful and secure; and after many ineffectual attempts, he was compelled to retrace his way back to his camp near Ferrara, where he might furnish himself with fresh succours to reduce his foe.

He accordingly made his appearance before the castle with a large force on the ensuing day, but he was then too late. Rolando had already set out with the beautiful Eufemia towards Verona, accompanied by his armed bands, after having celebrated his reunion with his fair lady at his enemy's expense, sitting down with his followers to a magnificent feast prepared before his arrival. Thus, in addition to the loss of the object of his pursuit, Rinaldo had the further mortification of being taken in his own snares, being charged with treachery towards his own party by delivering up their prisoners, an offence for which he was banished from his native city of Ferrara.

Nor was Rolando himself much more fortunate after his return to Verona. He was accused, both by the people of that place and by the Ferrarese, of having corrupted the fidelity of the public officers as well as their commander, in order to secure the safety of his own wife—a circumstance which gave rise to fresh dissensions between the parties when on the eve of accommodation. The state of Verona, moreover, brought accusations against Salinguerra, brother to Rinaldo, of having connived at the abduction of Eufemia before the ratification of peace, to gratify the licentious passion of the latter. When both states were about to appeal once more to arms, the people of Mantua interfered, proposing that Rolando, as well as Rinaldo, should be banished, and that their lives should be declared forfeited in their respective states. Thus the lovely and noble-minded Eufemia was plunged into new misfortunes. Her family petitioned the council of Verona that she might be separated from her consort and forcibly restrained from following a traitor and an outcast into foreign lands.

The state, however, refused to interfere; while she, having only a few hours to consider whether she should retain possession of the luxury and enjoyments of a court or become the companion of a poor forsaken exile, came to the virtuous resolution of embracing the latter lot. Before her relatives were aware of her intention or could take measures to prevent it, she was already on her way from her native land, accompanied by her only friend, for whom she had sacrificed so much.

No complaint ever escaped her lips; she shared the exile's sufferings, she soothed his indignation and anguish of mind, and she fanned his feverish brow. "Only love me," she would say, "love me as you have ever loved me, and there is nothing I cannot bear for your sake!" And with these words upon her lips, after innumerable privations and sufferings, she gently resigned her pure and constant spirit in his arms.

NOVELLA X

As a young cavalier was standing on the beach of Genoa, observing with an eye of curiosity the arrival of strangers from almost every clime, his attention was particularly attracted by the appearance of a lady, whose noble air and step, in spite of her simple and disordered dress of a pilgrim, could not fail to interest the beholder. She occasionally raised her fine eyes towards heaven, then cast them with an expression of wildness and sorrow upon the earth, as if doubtful where she should seek for relief, whether to confide in the mercy of the Deity alone or still venture to trust the world. "How ill," thought the young observer, "does that rude, neglected dress seem to become the sweet and noble features of her that wears it!" So earnestly did he continue to gaze on her, that though apparently buried in her own thoughts, she became aware of his notice, as all beautiful women are apt to do, and turning away her eyes towards the shore, she again withdrew them, and gazed around her as if greatly alarmed. The next moment there leaped upon shore from a little pilot-boat a person of a noble and imposing figure, evidently the occasion of her alarm, who singling her out in an instant, was speedily at her side. When he was about to address her, she recoiled from him a few paces, and turning towards the young cavalier, whose eyes were still fixed upon her, she said, "Save me, for the love of Heaven; save me from his sight." At the same time she approached close to him, as if placing herself under his protection; on which Ansaldo—so the young citizen was named—beckoned to one of his slaves, and saying, "You will take care of her," advanced to meet the stranger. "Stop, signor," he cried, as the latter attempted to pass him; "that lady has solicited my protection." "You have nothing to do in this, signor," said the stranger, pushing on, "you had better give way and withdraw." "That I will cheerfully do," returned Ansaldo, "when you have answered me a few questions." "No, signor," was the reply; "I wish to speak with the lady, who has so very unnecessarily appealed to your regard."

"Of that," said the other, "I must now judge; in the meantime, I will permit you to speak to her if she consents to it" "Permit, signor!" exclaimed the stranger; "you have no interest in her; you can have none equal to what I feel. Why do you then oppose me? Is it wise, is it courteous to a stranger?" "Would it be courteous to a lady, signor, a stranger and alone," retorted Ansaldo, "to reject such an appeal?" "Then thus will I enforce my claim to be heard,' returned the other, as he clapped his hand to his rapier, while the young cavalier was preparing to do the same. But the fair pilgrim, recovering herself from the shock of her first surprise, now summoned courage to address the stranger as she stepped between, 'Wherefore are you come? Return and enjoy your good fortune, but leave me to my sorrows alone." A deep sigh followed these words, which led Ansaldo to believe that he was perhaps only interfering in a mere love quarrel, as he said in a conciliatory tone, "You had better agree to become friends; there is a crowd already gathering about us; let us not consent to gratify the folly and curiosity of all the world. Come with me to my house, and we shall find means, I doubt not, of clearing up the mistake. I dare say it is not the first time you have quarrelled, nor will it be the first love pique which I have had the pleasure to remove." "No, no," cried the fair lady, "I will go with you, but not to your house. You are good, very good; but I will never consent to cross the same threshold with him again. Let the ingrate enjoy all I have conferred upon him, but cease to think of me more. For this reason did I leave him; I will receive nothing at his hands," and with a quick step she hastened along the shore. Ansaldo, curious to learn the result of such an adventure, also followed her, saying to the stranger with a smile, "Do not despair, but let us try to pacify her;" for he was now sorry to see the wretchedness of his looks. "What is her name?" "Eurispe," said the stranger in a sorrowful tone. "If I thought she would ever forgive me and be reconciled, there is nothing"——But here interrupting him, the lady said to Ansaldo, "Let me thank you for your kindness; I will trouble you no longer, if you will take that man away with you and remove him from my sight." "I will go with him," said the stranger, in a gentle tone, "after I have spoken to you, when I am sure you will be satisfied" "No; you have spoken to me enough," replied Eurispe; "let me go where I please, Constanzo; leave me to myself. Trifle with my forbearance no longer; never venture more to appear in my sight. I should hate myself were I capable of repenting of my resolution." "But only hear me, and then treat me as you please," said Constanzo; "describe my conduct in the darkest colours you can, and let this gentleman decide between us" "Traitor!" cried Eurispe, "and would you revive the recollection of all your baseness and unkindness to harrow up my soul afresh? Out of my sight! take him away!" she continued, as she again turned into a new path to avoid him, while Ansaldo, in greater perplexity than before, was now attempting to prevail upon Constanzo to leave her to herself. But the stranger observing, "We shall soon, I trust, be better friends," again accosted the lady with a more cheerful air: "Do not be so angry, dear lady, but consent to return

with me quietly home: you will find me everything that the kindest benefactress could wish, and be convinced how truly I respect and honour you." "And is mockery too to be added to my woe? This was still wanting; but——" and drawing a poniard from her bosom, she rushed upon him like a fury, and stabbed him several times before Ansaldo could disarm her. But she dropped the weapon of her own accord and went on, while the young citizen, having consigned the wounded stranger to the care of his slaves, quickly overtook her, bidding her follow him if she wished to save herself from the hands of justice and an ignominious death. She obeyed, while the people engaged with the wounded man gave them time to escape. As they were proceeding along they met with an aged priest, to whom Ansaldo having communicated their distress, he consented to afford the fair culprit an asylum in his own house. After having seen her in safety, and committed her into the hands of the females of the house, Ansaldo proceeded to inquire into the situation of the wounded man, whom he found in the utmost danger, the surgeon declaring that he must be kept perfectly quiet, or he could not answer for his life. The patient, however, who had caught Ansaldo's voice, insisted upon seeing him immediately. His first wishes were expressed for Eurispe's safety, and his gratitude towards the author of it was unbounded. He next entreated that he might have a notary, in order to depose that he had incurred his own fate from the hand of his superior and his benefactress, whose servant he was, and not from an equal, or from any other cause. He further requested that no process or investigation might take place, and that if such were insisted upon, the lady at all events might, agreeably to his last wishes, be acquitted. Ansaldo, after trying to encourage him and to soothe his deep emotions by promising in every respect to fulfil his wishes, left him to repose, and returned to the wretched Eurispe, more desirous than ever of penetrating into the mystery in which their story was apparently involved. He informed her of what Constanzo had said, how much he appeared interested in her safety, and he expressed his hopes that the affair was yet open to reconciliation, without coming under the cognisance of justice. At the same time he assured her of his influence and support in case of the worst, advising her to assume a different dress, and to partake of such courtesy and hospitality as he had it in his power to bestow. Affected by his kindness, Eurispe returned her grateful thanks; while she sought to avoid his earnest and inquisitive looks, which more than once seemed to ask for an explanation. Indeed she appeared to shrink from the least approach towards the subject, and she was almost as much unable to bear the admiration of her beauty, which he occasionally evinced in his fixed and ardent gaze Blushing at the suspicious situation in which she was conscious that she appeared, she soon therefore rose, on the plea of want of rest, to which, however reluctantly, Ansaldo was compelled to yield, and afterwards proceeded to consult with his reverend host. But as they were both equally at a loss what to think or how to act in the strange circumstances in which they found themselves placed, they agreed to avoid making the matter public until they had learned further particulars and ascertained

the result. They were resolved in the meanwhile to detain and interrogate her after she had enjoyed a little repose, the priest at the same time informing Ansaldo that he might rest assured of her safe and honourable custody while in his house; for the young gentleman was evidently a little uneasy on that score. Soon after he had taken his leave, there arrived at the house a variety of wines and all the delicacies of the season, from which the reverend host only concluded that the poor young man was already deeply smitten with the fair culprit left in his charge. On this account he did not think it proper to present them to her, but giving them into the hands of his housekeeper, ordered her to put them carefully under lock and key. In a few hours, to the surprise of the good priest, the young lady again made her appearance, at the same time requesting an audience, with which our conscientious father, having secured the wine, was fain to comply. Yet it was not without some fear and trembling; for there was a degree of wildness in her eye, which, on recollecting her late exploit, gave him no little uneasiness, and completely banished the least idea of dwelling upon her charms He very unprofessionally entreated that the old housekeeper might witness their interview, a request he had never before made during confession; but the lady insisted upon making her disclosures to him alone. Though forced to comply, he sat very uneasy in his chair; if he saw her eyes sparkle, he thought she was running mad; or if his glance met hers, or rested a moment on her lovely bosom, he only dreamed of concealed daggers and sudden death. When she exhibited any violent emotion, the matter became still more serious, if she happened to touch him, he recoiled, and he became eager only to soothe, and to grant her absolution from all her sins. Indeed the young admirer would have felt quite satisfied with his priestly demeanour had he seen him; and the poor man was greatly relieved when his fair but fearful guest addressed him in the following words: "It is now, holy father, time to part; you must permit me to resume my wanderings whither I will." "Oh, certainly, certainly," said the compliant father, forgetting his promise to Ansaldo. "Yes," she continued, "I must go: I must not remain here to involve myself, as well as that innocent and excellent young man, in fresh troubles" "Oh, by no means," said the good father, alarmed at the elevation of her voice. "Then do you wish me to go, to be so soon rid of me?" cried Eurispe, in a louder tone. "Oh, by no means," he exclaimed, repeating his words, "that is, I mean I would have you please yourself." "Then I will hasten away," she replied; "that noble young man must not suffer for my sake, for I foresee what would shortly happen. he would love, and become wretched as I have been." "There is not the least doubt of that," said the priest, desirous of conciliating her as much as possible. "Is there not?" pursued the lady; "you mistake me—how dare you say that?" "How? how? Oh, because he told me," cried the alarmed priest: "he said so, to be sure." "Then quick; let me away; prepare me a barge,—here is money; go soon, very soon." "Yes, now," cried her confessor, rejoiced to get away, "it is the best plan; I will give orders immediately." And he forthwith, in spite of his promises to Ansaldo,

proceeded with the business. Hastening directly to the beach, he bespoke a felucca from Palermo, which was just on its return, and having placed his fair guest in a close carriage, he caused her to be carried at the appointed hour, while the good citizens were engaged at dinner, to the shore, agreed with the mariners for her passage, and she set sail. On touching at Viareggio, for the purpose of better concealment, she assumed another name and dress; thence passing on to Lucca, she hired a small house, with only one domestic, and secluded herself completely from the world.

We must now return to Ansaldo, who, in the utmost eagerness and agitation, proceeded the next morning to the priest's abode, desirous of informing his fair culprit of the dangerous situation of Constanzo. The surgeon had declared there was no hope for him; and though he ought to have felt greatly shocked at such tidings, and desirous, like the good priest, of breaking off all communication with the prisoner, yet such was the impression that her charms had produced, that he felt something very like pleasure at the idea of her being thus consigned to his care, and at being enabled, perhaps, to penetrate into the motives of her strange conduct. What was his surprise and indignation, then, to find that she was gone! The good father, alarmed at his excessive rage and emotion, affected complete ignorance of her disappearance, declaring that she must have escaped from her window during the night; and that he was well assured she was a witch, an emissary of the devil, and no real woman; for he had never passed such a night in his life. In spite of Ansaldo's threats to extort further confession, he persisted in this story, so far from satisfactory to the young lover's feelings, whose mind was filled with the most distressing apprehensions. Still, however, having no proofs to the contrary, he was compelled to rest satisfied with the story, such as it was, and after engaging the priest to assist in the recovery of the fair culprit, he was again called to the dying couch of Constanzo.

"I wish,' said this unhappy martyr of woman's scorn, as Ansaldo drew nigh, 'I wish before I depart, as I shortly must, to acquaint you, as a friend, with some circumstances of my life. It is true that I perish by the hand of one who professed to love me as dearly as her own life, and who was once mistress of my soul. Though aware of her strange and fickle disposition, I still confided in her attachment, and could not possibly have contemplated what has happened. Deign to listen then to our singular history, and you will be enabled to judge how far I am to blame; for though I have erred, there is much palliation for my conduct.

"Euterpe is a noble lady of Cosenza, sole heiress to a rich family, and was early sacrificed to the views of ambition in a union with a man of high rank, much older than herself. Such likewise were his infirmities, that happily for her he died within a few months after his marriage, leaving her the mistress of an immense fortune. Thus freed at length from the influence and restraint of her family, she continued to lead a single life from her fifteenth to her eighteenth year, devoting herself to noble and charitable pursuits, and loved and honoured by all in her vicinity. It was at this period I became acquainted with her.

During a commercial voyage I had the misfortune to fall a captive to that celebrated but detested corsair, Amurat Rais; and after encountering various hardships, I was at length offered to sale, and purchased by a foreign merchant, whose affairs soon afterwards carried him into Calabria. He was induced to allow me to accompany him by the offer of two hundred crowns, to be paid on my arrival, in addition to what else he might obtain for my ransom We disembarked at Cosenza, where Eurispe, having seen and taken compassion on me, kindly paid down the sum required, and took me into her service. Such was my gratitude, that though she would have permitted me to resume my affairs and return to my native place, I found it impossible. For my gratitude and respect soon ripened into a deeper feeling, and though I scarcely ventured to confess it even to my own heart, that heart, in spite of me, began to beat tumultuously when it caught even the sound of the approaching footsteps of my bright and honoured lady. You have seen her, but you cannot now form an idea of her noble and charming manners, and of the surpassing beauty, both of her mind and person. Soon I had the happiness to obtain her confidence in the management of her affairs I became the steward of her fortune, the happy medium of her numerous pious and charitable benefactions to the country around Never, however, did I venture to breathe a word, or to raise my eyes to hers, beyond the immediate scope of my duties, but I suffered dreadfully as I became more deeply and truly attached. When did love such as mine listen to reason or summon courage to abandon the scene of its sorrows—the sweet and bitter pleasure of gazing on the object it must never possess? I could not quite repress the grief at my heart; sighs escaped me in her presence, I madly gazed on her whenever I thought myself unseen, and well might the poet of love exclaim —

'Ben s' intende
Chiusa fiamma talhor da chi l' accende '

'A secret sympathy conveys the smart '

For truly in a short while she appeared to become aware of my unhappy passion, though she neither reproached nor admonished me Surprised and delighted beyond measure, hope for the first time sent the blood tingling through my veins, and I dared to look up, though still in fear and silence. About this time, however, an incident occurred which put my resolution of burying my griefs in my own bosom to a severer trial than any I had yet borne A young cavalier who resided near became more and more frequent in his visits; he admired her beauty, but he considered her fortune a still higher prize He was not really in love with her, and this she appeared at length to have discovered, and gave him his dismissal But he would not take this as a final denial, and continued to haunt her residence in such a manner, that I was fearful he would in the end succeed in his project. As I was late one evening indulging in bitter fancies, a person arriving on horseback was announced, and on his being shown into the room where I was sitting, I had the pain of beholding my haughty rival. With an air of ease and freedom he entreated hospitality for the night, pleading the lateness of the hour; upon which, turning from him with

a feeling of bitter jealousy, I went to acquaint the lady. My anguish was visible on my countenance; and I had the mortification to hear her say that she feared in common courtesy she could not refuse him. I thought she blushed deeply as she said so; and bursting into sudden passion, I exclaimed, 'Then first permit me to leave the house.' 'No, that must not be,' she replied; 'I cannot spare you, for I am going myself. You will attend me as far as my friendly neighbour's, and inform the gentleman on your return that I am on a visit there, and too unwell to see him.' I bowed in delighted emotion to the earth. I thought I should have fallen at her feet and blessed her; for she had removed a load of wretchedness from my soul; and with a joyous and triumphant air I hastened to rejoin the cavalier.

"With what secret pleasure did I deliver the lady's message and answer the thousand questions which he addressed to me! Whether he perceived this I know not; but though I now made myself the best company in the world, and treated him with all the delicacies the house could afford, I failed to make myself agreeable. He seemed hurt that I ventured to sit down to supper with him; he began to frown, and to regard me with no very pleasant looks; until observing that I took no notice of them, he began to hazard sarcastic remarks, inquiring whether, in my capacity of steward, I did not find that house-dogs, when caressed, were apt to become too familiar. 'Certainly,' I said, 'there is great difference between men and dogs, the one being fond of bones and the other of reputation.' 'It follows then,' replied my polite guest, 'that he who enters into service without regard to his reputation acts beneath himself, and is unworthy even of a menial's situation.' 'Ah!' I cried, suddenly plucking forth my rapier in the impulse of passion, 'were you not here under my honoured lady's roof, I would stab you to the heart. Insult me if you please; but dare to introduce her pure and unstained name, and it shall be the last word you will ever speak.' Instead of meeting the fierce indignation with which I spoke in as fierce a tone, to my surprise he became somewhat softened; when turning away with a feeling of unutterable contempt, I left him alone to his own cogitations. In the morning, when breakfast was announced, it was found that he had taken his departure early; not very long afterwards we heard that he had left the country, and finally, that he had been assassinated on his route from Cosenza towards Lucca, most probably without making any defence, for he certainly could never have fallen in a duel. Freed from this despicable rival, I became somewhat bolder in my pretensions; my eyes began to reveal what my tongue refused to tell; and instead of hating me, I thought that hers seemed to invite me to give my looks a language. I was one day engaged in rendering her an account of some sums of money which had lately passed through my hands; but such was my trepidation, such my wish of discovering the sentiments I entertained for her, that I repeated the same errors over and over, until, half angry and half laughing at my perplexity, she asked me if I had really run mad. 'I fear I have long been so,' I replied, 'and it will not be long before you will have to send me to an asylum, and you will have'——Here my voice failed me, and I could

say no more. 'And I shall have to answer for it; is that what you mean, Constanzo?' 'You have said it,' I replied, 'and you ought not to make so light of it, I assure you. It were better I should leave your service at once. I have resources of my own. I am neither poor nor ignoble.' 'Ah! Constanzo, did I ever think, did I ever say you were?' Her face became crimson when she had uttered this; but suddenly checking herself, she added, 'I am not often used to jest in this way, and it is perhaps not very becoming either in you or in myself.'

"As I had at length, however, mastered the subject, I soon summoned courage enough to proceed. 'The fault, most honoured lady, lies more in your beauty than in me. I have fought with my feelings long and terribly. I have tried to remain reasonable; but it is vain to deny it. I have loved, I have sorrowed, I have despaired, and I must meet with mercy, or I must cease to exist.' Uttering this, I fell at her feet, and covered her hands with my kisses and my tears. 'You are mad, indeed,' she exclaimed, as she attempted to assume a tone of anger, though she scarcely struggled to withdraw her hands. 'It is done,' I cried; 'condemn, reproach me as you will, but do not drive me from your presence' 'If you loved me,' she answered, 'you could not talk of leaving me, nor could I afford to lose your service, but,' she continued, resuming her composure, 'I shall never permit the repetition of such a scene, for your own sake I shall not; you must try to banish so absurd an idea. But it is a mere fancy, and therefore I pardon you this time, on the condition that you never breathe a syllable of the like again.' Her voice trembled, however, and not with anger, as she uttered these commands, out of a feeling of pride and dignity, which had yet to contend with a superior foe. Though promising obedience, I was now too happy and triumphant to observe it, and even without resuming the conversation, I daily made such visible progress in her affections, as soon to induce her to feel pleasure in acknowledging me for her lover with her own lips. Soon I insisted on her repeating, for the thousandth time, that she loved me, and was happy in my having owned that I loved her in return.

"Such being our mutual attachment, it was resolved, in order to avoid the least occasion for remark, to sanction it with our union almost immediately; Eurispe proposing to dispose of the estates at Cosenza, and to retire for a season to a delicious residence in the vicinity of Puggia, out of the reach of the invidious observations with which she was aware we should be unjustly assailed. Just at this period, however, it was our ill fortune that a widow lady, with her daughter, a very beautiful and accomplished girl, arrived at Cosenza on their way from Sicily; an event which entirely altered the colour of our destiny. I had heard, I had seen much of the fickleness of women, but such an instance as that I am about to record could never have entered into my comprehension. The knowledge that these ladies were in misfortune was enough to induce Eurispe to offer them a home, and to lavish upon them every consolation and comfort in her power to bestow. But grief and sickness had already made inroads too deep on the health of the mother to admit of much allevia-

tion. She continued gradually to sink; all her dying thoughts were wrapt up in her daughter, and expressing her deep gratitude for our kindness, she tenderly recommended her poor girl to our protection, and soon after expired.

"With a sister's affection, then, my adored Eurispe received the beautiful Lesbia to her arms, and like a sister she made her the partner of everything she possessed. Their acquaintance ripened into the strictest intimacy, and Eurispe no longer talked of disposing of her estate. She began, indeed, to give me some reason to complain. She delayed, under a thousand pretexts, to fulfil her immediate promise of yielding me her hand. I took the alarm, and became more earnest and urgent, fearful that fortune was about to abandon me when just on the consummation of all my dearest wishes. Still she delayed. She would no longer listen to my complaints; and I was compelled to dissemble the disappointment and anguish of my heart. One evening as I was beginning to press the subject, she interrupted me by alluding to the beauty and accomplishments of her fair charge, and after dwelling upon them for some time, she added, 'What think you, Constanzo, will Lesbia say? what will the world say of us, if we proceed, in spite of all difficulties and inequalities, to seal our attachment at the altar? I know you to be fully deserving of my affection, but I fear for my reputation, to which every one, you are aware, sacrifices so much. Let us consider, then, while there is yet time; let us see that we are not preparing future unhappiness for each other. Under all circumstances I think it would be the wiser and the safer plan that you should try to forget me, and to love my gentle Lesbia, upon whom I will confer such a dowry as will leave you no reason to repent. I shall thus, I am sure, escape much scandal and ill usage, for the world never pardons such an error, and I dare not commit it.' I grew pale and trembled with emotion as she spoke; I beheld the promised delights of love and fortune fading from my view. What was Lesbia to me? Unknown, uncared for! what was all the world beside? For some moments I could not speak; but laying my head upon my hand, I sighed deeply. 'Well might Fortune,' at length I cried, 'be likened unto a woman—a woman in fickleness, such as you. Oh, cruel as you have been, to raise me, Eurispe, from the earth into the very heaven of love, only to precipitate me into the depths of despair. You tell me to love Lesbia, that you will give us your fortune: but it is not your fortune I love, it is you. Do you think I can so easily change, and transfer my affections as readily as my dress? No, I were then unworthy both of her and you. You snatched me out of misfortune, it is true, but you would now, by depriving me of ineffable hopes, by tearing me from yourself, plunge me into greater misery than I have yet suffered, and destroy all my happiness upon earth.' 'But such love is a folly,' she cried, 'why indulge it? To be happy we must be reasonable. And I do not deprive you of myself, for I give you fortune; your love, I fear, would soon be over; but fortune will last when love is gone. I begin to see that our attachment was an idle and childish thing from the first; and if I give you Lesbia, you can have no reason to complain. Think of it, and think wisely. I love you, or I have

loved you; but we must submit to the voice of reason, and no longer think of playing the fool.'

"As she said this in a hard and careless tone, she precipitately left the room, leaving me to no very agreeable reflections, of which indignation was not the least. In the sudden revulsion of my feelings I could have sought the side of the fair Lesbia; I could have wished, by lavishing the most tender attentions, to give the faithless and heartless one a pang of jealousy, and make her feel something of the pain I endured. What strange motive could have actuated her? was it mere fickleness, scorn, or jealousy? Surely, I thought, I could have given her no reason for the latter, though I had more than once remarked, in conversing together, that she jested on the subject in the presence of Lesbia; that she had her eye upon us, and that she might probably entertain an idea of trying the stability of my affection—for such, I had heard, was the simulation and subtlety of love. When this struck me, I came to the resolution of persevering in a virtuous and constant line of action, and by this conduct at least to merit the love and confidence of one whom I feared I could not forget.

"With this view I resolved to be perfectly open and sincere with her, and the next day went to her to inform her how impossible it was that I could be obedient to her wishes. 'Did I try to forget you, it would be in vain, and still more so to turn my affections elsewhere. Permit me, my dear lady, to remain, therefore, with you, to try to merit your approbation of my conduct, if I can no longer retain your affection; and if you repent the kindness, the sweet hopes and promises you have lavished on me, do not, at least, deprive me of your society. For, believe me, I shall either succeed in recovering your affections, or soon end my sorrowful days as I wish to do.' 'Indeed, Constanzo,' she replied, 'I wish you to stay with me; I do not at all regret the kindness and affection I have lavished on you, for I am still as much attached to you as ever, and nothing but an imperative sense of duty could prevent me from sealing my affection at the altar. I would willingly give you my hand, but the world will not have it so; it requires equality of rank at least in the husband, or it will asperse the fair fame of her who raises him to her own standard And even if we had left Cosenza, as we intended, it would have pursued us with its taunts and mockery, would have said we were ashamed of our errors, and blasted our future happiness whithersoever we had turned. It is better, then, as it is, and if you truly love me, you will strive to bury what has passed in oblivion, and keep it from the world.' 'And this I could have done,' I made answer, 'had you not flattered me with other hopes, Eurispe; but you have received and returned my vows; I am no longer master of my own affections, and I take Love to witness that I cannot and will not permit you to retract. We have given our mutual consent; by mutual consent alone, then, can we become disunited Whether Love be a divinity or not, I cannot tell; but I feel something like his divinity within me, allied to everything that is noble, and perfect, and pure in its nature. Its divinity, besides, is said to be immortal, and I cannot cease to love you at pleasure.' 'But you must be obedient; you promised me that you would, Constanzo.' 'Yes, but

you first promised to be mine; and it is I only who have to complain.' 'If your love be so true and perfect, then,' she returned, 'continue to love me thus virtuously; be satisfied that I esteem and value you, but let us venture no further to unite our lot in one.' 'It may be easy for you,' I replied, 'to talk and even to act in this manner, faithless and cold-hearted as you are; but to me there is death even in the thought. You are become very strange and casuistical of late, and unusually afraid of the opinion of the world; and had I not more confidence in you than you appear to have in me, I should say that you had formed some new attachment, and wished to be rid of me altogether.' 'No,' exclaimed Eurispe, a little piqued, 'I have formed no new attachment; though it is true that I wish to recall my promise, on the condition of settling a very sufficient fortune upon my Lesbia, which you may accept or refuse at your own pleasure;' and having said this, she again turned somewhat coldly from me.

"Disappointed pride, jealousy, and revenge now all took possession of my soul at once; and in the hopes that I might perhaps awaken some degree of pain by exciting her jealousy and affection, I resolved to obey her, and to devote my whole attention to Lesbia. In this view I exerted all my powers of pleasing to the uttermost, I lavished upon her the most delicate attentions, striving to make myself the most agreeable to her in the presence of Eurispe, to whom I affected to praise her incessantly. Eurispe seemed, however, to regard my conduct with indifference, preserving the same kind and conciliating manners towards Lesbia, and rather encouraging our apparent intimacy. But bitterly did we both repent this error; for having assumed, not with impunity, the character of the fair Lesbia's lover, it was soon my fate to become gradually enamoured of her attractions, thus showing my obedience to the orders of my mistress. Nor did my attentions seem at all disagreeable to her; in a little while she returned my affection, and it was agreed by Eurispe that our nuptials should be immediately celebrated. From this time the proud Eurispe seemed to treat me on terms of nearer equality; the time stipulated for my service since she redeemed me from captivity was expired, and possessing some little fortune of my own, besides what she settled on Lesbia, we considered ourselves extremely fortunate in our union. Nor had we any reason for some period to repent of it, for Lesbia loved me most truly and tenderly, her virtues and attractions soon won my whole heart, and we were as perfectly happy as we wished to be.

"But our happiness was doomed to be of short continuance, the manners of our fair hostess became colder, she sought to avoid our society, and appeared hurt at witnessing our mutual regard for each other. Her conduct soon became extremely variable; she was either absorbed in sorrow or affected the liveliest spirits imaginable: she would treat us with contempt and unkindness, or lavish upon us the warmest expressions of favour. It was now I dreaded any feelings of uneasiness or jealousy at our union as much as I had before wished to excite them. She was often strange and harsh towards my Lesbia; her dislike to her seemed to increase, while her manner towards me was more flattering. She even sought my society in her absence; she

grew pale, she blushed at my approach, and sometimes she burst into tears. The full extent of our calamity now opened upon me, for tenderly and passionately did I love my wife; I had forgotten Eurispe. Without communicating my suspicions to Lesbia, I pressed our immediate departure; but of this our fair hostess would not hear; she was even extremely hurt and angry at the proposal. Indeed, whenever I recurred to the subject, she seemed more desirous than ever of conciliating me: she flattered me and tried to win my attention, while she assumed the utmost coldness and indifference on the approach of my wife. Fortunately Lesbia was thus unacquainted with my unhappiness, for I wished to spare her the pain of witnessing the grief of our benefactress. But what a fate was mine! to behold her whom I had loved, but who had broken her vows and repaid my love with scorn, the victim of her own infidelity. Deeply indebted to her as I was, could I behold her thus suffering for my sake? yet, could I consent to plunge her and myself into still greater misfortunes? We were already on the brink of a precipice, for her affection became daily more evident; it was my Lesbia only who stood between us and destruction, Eurispe no longer attempting to conceal from me the warmth of her feelings. It was now her turn to meet with the coolness and indifference she had formerly shown to me, and to taste something of the bitter fruits of faithless and unrequited affection. But she was too passionate and impatient to submit to the ordeal, too weak to conquer; and after vainly appealing to my love and to my compassion, she began to upbraid me. I then gently reminded her that it was her own work, and the result of her express injunction, however reluctantly I had submitted to it. That, moreover, it would be base and cruel to desert and sacrifice, as she proposed, my beautiful Lesbia, by plunging ourselves into irremediable wretchedness and ruin. Passion, indignation, and grief seemed to struggle for utterance in her reply, as she declared that she had never disowned her love for me; that I knew she had always continued attached to me, in spite of her exertions to act consistently with her duty, and that I had made her words a pretext for breaking with her. 'Every word, every look you give to Lesbia,' she continued, 'is justly my own, and yet you refuse to restore to me even a portion of what you have robbed me of. Your happiness is injustice, it is ingratitude, it is death to me!' 'You grieve me to the heart, my dear lady and benefactress,' I replied, 'for with your own you have destroyed my hopes of happiness for ever. But think how unworthy I ever was of possessing you, let the same pride and dignity which led you to abandon me support you now. Think how many noble motives, how many great objects you have yet to live for; live, then, and bestow your hand upon some more fortunate and deserving being. Assert once more your pride and dignity, the same prudence and greatness of soul that you have ever shown; recollect who you are and what the world expects from you!' Though somewhat harsh, I thought it quite requisite to speak in the manner I did. It brought the blood in tides of crimson to her cheeks; her neck, her temples, and her very finger-ends seemed to burn with a sense of shame and indignation. Yet my words had the desired effect: the sudden revulsion

The Cordelier Metamorphosed:

AS NARRATED IN A MANUSCRIPT FROM THE BORROMEO COLLECTION.

ATTRIBUTED TO MICHELE COLOMBO.

——o——

THIS version of the following amusing little tale proceeded, some years since, from the pen of a gentleman well known in our literary circles for the extent and variety of his talents and attainments. This translation, the production of a leisure moment, was made by him and printed from the original manuscript formerly in the collection of the late Count Borromeo of Padua, at the sale of which in 1817, among other articles, it fell to his lot. "It stands entitled in the catalogue of that sale—

'No. 250. Novella di Gianni Andato al Bosco a far legna, &c., in 4to, inedita.'

And it is there, upon what authority," continues the translator, "I know not, attributed, together with some preceding articles of the catalogue, to Michele Colombo. It attracted my notice from its close resemblance in the principal incidents of the story to 'Le Cordelier Cheval,' or, as it is sometimes entitled, 'Le Moine Bridé,' of Alexis Piron, a tale which I have always esteemed as not the least pleasant of that author's facetious effusions; and suspecting that Piron, like La Fontaine before him, often gathered his subjects from some older record, I have looked in vain among the earlier novelists for an original hint of this story. Whether the Italian be really such, or merely an imitation, or whether both the narrations be not borrowed from some preceding collection of facetiæ, I will not pretend to determine.

"Of Colombo as a writer I have not met with any notice; but it would seem that in Tiraboschi's time he was possessed of some curious books at Padua.[1] Without better information, one may reasonably doubt whether he was the author of those articles which Borromeo has attributed to him. Acute and experienced judges of the Italian language have assured me that this novel, if not a genuine production of the old school, is at least a clever imitation of its quaint style and dry humour."—G. H., *Dedication*.

[1] Tiraboschi, "Storia della Letteratura Ital.," v. 7, pp. 12, 13.

PREFACE.

(FROM THE ITALIAN.)

So numerous are the evils and vexations of our life, that he who undertakes the laudable task of providing for us an innocent recreation deserves to be counted a benefactor to mankind; and although pre-eminent beyond comparison be the merit of those excellent writers who have been able to unite in their works the useful with the agreeable, yet neither are those to be lightly esteemed who, not presuming to undertake our instruction, confine their efforts to the furnishing us with a little harmless entertainment.

With this object principally in their view, men of distinguished talents (as one of the most conspicuous among them has himself declared) have occasionally given us, in pure and elegant language, a series of interesting novels, of which, if some few may possibly afford, in the intricacies of our walk through life, a useful lesson, by far the greater part have certainly no higher pretension than the amusement of their readers. Should I be lucky enough to obtain your not unwilling attention to a curious adventure which befell an honest rustic in our neighbourhood, I shall think the few minutes well bestowed which I have spent in committing to paper the following story.

THE CORDELIER METAMORPHOSED.

IN one of the districts of Montferrat dwelt a poor labourer, whose name was Gilbert. For the support of himself and family he cultivated a small enclosure, and whatever time he could snatch from the labours of his little farm he employed in gathering faggots from a wood which was at no great distance These he brought home on the back of an ass, of which he was become the master, and afterwards, as opportunity served, conveyed them to the market of the next town, where, with the money they produced, he purchased such articles as were most wanted by his family. Gilbert was a simple fellow, and so credulous that you might have made him believe almost any absurdity. It happened one day that, wishing to penetrate into the interior of the wood, he left his ass tied to a tree at the outskirts. Soon afterwards there passed that way two minor brethren of Saint Francis, Father Antony of Como, and Father Timothy of Casal Maggiore. Of missal or of breviary Father Timothy took little heed; he was one of those who, not yet on familiar terms with his alphabet, had attached himself to that holy order with no other aim than that of being useful in its most ordinary concerns In company with Father Antony he rambled over the circumjacent districts, begging, for Christian charity's sake, contributions of bread, wine, fruit, and whatever else could be obtained for the maintenance and solace of the poor brotherhood. Yet was there not one among them of quicker and acuter in-

vention than he; a brain more fantastical it is impossible to imagine; and his most whimsical tricks were accomplished with such pleasantry and good humour, that he was the admiration of his associates. Now these two friars having had a tedious tramp through roads somewhat muddy, and bending their course homewards with their bags well filled, were so fatigued that it was with great difficulty they could set one foot before the other; yet had they a good distance to travel ere they could reach their monastery. Accordingly, Father Timothy, observing that the ass was there unguarded, and considering it to be unreasonable that an animal made to carry burthens should stand there fresh and idle, while they, tired and breathless, bore on their shoulders no trifling weight, made up his mind without hesitation. Turning round to his companion, he asked with a smile, "Brother Antony, what would you give if you could have this ass to carry our bags?" "Verily," answered the other, "so nearly am I exhausted, that just now it would suit me well." "And do not you see," rejoined Timothy, "that it is Providence that has guided us to this beast? Let us not reject the boon that is thus opportunely thrown in our way." With these words, approaching the animal, he threw his wallet on its back, and invited his companion to do the same; then loosing the halter from the ass's head, he fitted it upon his own, and proceeded to fasten himself to the tree, exactly in the position in which they had found the animal. Next turning to Father Antony, "Go," said he, "my good brother; lead this beast back with thee to the convent, and there tell our brethren, that I, suddenly attacked by fever, have found refuge in the house of a benevolent peasant, who, for the more expeditious conveyance of our collection of bread to the convent, has charitably lent thee this ass, which we may return to him next week, when, in quest of provisions, or for any other purpose, we may be coming this way. As for me, say that, please God, I hope to be with them in the course of to-morrow." Hearing a proposal so extraordinary, Antony doubted if he were awake, and, used as he was to the whimsicalities of Timothy, yet this freak appeared to him so extravagant that he began to suspect his poor brother was really crazed, and fixing his eyes upon him with a stupid stare, stood motionless and mute. "Away!" cried Timothy, half angry; "lose no time, a moment's delay may defeat our purpose; leave me to take care of myself, and this halter may chance not to gall my neck so grievously as you perhaps suspect. Have I not, Antony, shown you more than one sample of what I can accomplish? Confide implicitly in me; do what I desire, or you will repent it; begone!" This he spoke in a tone so decisive and imperative, that Antony submitted, and replied, "Since so you command, so I will do; look you to the consequences;" and forthwith driving the loaded beast before him, he punctually obeyed the directions his comrade had given. The holy brotherhood, when they heard of the accident which had befallen Father Timothy, concluded that, since Providence orders all for the best, they must seek consolation for their brother's *mischance* in a pious reliance upon the Divine mercy, and in the meantime be thankful that Timothy's good host should have been disposed to despatch to them with so much provident expedition their supply of bread.

Gilbert, having at length gathered and bundled together his faggots, hastened from the wood to place them on the back of his ass; and seeing who it was that stood in the animal's place, exclaimed, "Lord have mercy on us!" then crossed himself with trembling astonishment, and fearing that this was nothing less than a malicious trick played him by the devil, was about to run away. Recollecting, however, that the Evil One would be little inclined to assume the figure of a holy Franciscan, he somewhat checked his terror, but without any diminution of his stupor and amazement.

When Timothy observed his surprise and confusion, he could with difficulty refrain from laughing; but yet recollecting himself and composing his countenance, he thus addressed him: "Thou art amazed, my friend, and truly not without reason, at that which thou beholdest, but what then will be thy astonishment when thou shalt learn the remainder of my story? Approach without dread; for thyself have no apprehension; but admire, in my case, the powerful hand and mysterious judgments of Heaven! It was thy belief that thou hadst an ass in thy stable, whilst, under the figure of that animal, thou wert harbouring there an unfortunate Franciscan, no other than myself!" "Can you be serious, good father?" said Gilbert, interrupting him. "Did I not tell thee," quickly rejoined the friar, "that this thy astonishment would be redoubled by my narration? Free me, I pray thee from this disgraceful halter, the only vestige now left of my ignominy. Think not, oh, my son!" (continued Timothy when the rope was removed from his neck), "think not that, however sanctified be the life which a mortal leads here below, he therefore becomes sinless! So frail is humanity, so many the occasions of offence, and so strong and frequent the temptations that assail us, that it is a hard thing for a man to escape; he may resolve to fly from the world and to hide himself from its allurements, yet he carries still about him his carnal appetites, those treacherous enemies of his peace. What wonder, then, if occasionally he should yield to seduction, although dwelling in the sacred asylum of piety? Even I, I myself, had the ill fortune to fall, and my sins were of that nature and degree, that it pleased the Divine justice, by way of punishment, to transform me into a vile beast of burden, in order that in its shape I might undergo the penance I too well had merited. In this most wretched condition, so severe, as well thou knowest, have been the sufferings I have endured, that it has pleased God at length, in His compassion, to raise me from my degradation, and to restore me to the dignity of the human form." Gilbert, who gave entire faith to the friar's story, recollecting all that he had made the poor ass endure, was filled with sorrowful contrition, and throwing himself upon his knees before the friar, cried in a supplicating tone, "And can you, my good father, ever forgive me the blows, innumerable as they have been, which you have had from my hands, and the curses, moreover, which you have so often heard from my lips? Atrocious indeed do they now appear to me, since great is my veneration for your holy order, and for your pious founder, St. Francis!" "Let not these recollections afflict thee," said Timothy, affectionately raising him from the ground; "for heaping as thou didst thy blows

upon my back and sides, thou gavest to my flesh that salutary castigation which it was Heaven's will it should sustain, rebellious as it had too often proved, it was but right that it should suffer the punishment needful to bring it back into the path of duty Nay, I will tell thee, that in this instance thou hast rendered me no inconsiderable service; for the more frequent and heavy were the blows of thy cudgel, the more speedily was by that means my sum of penance accomplished and the period of my deliverance accelerated. Far, therefore, from owing thee any grudge on that score, I ought to thank thee for it; and I give thee my word, that when once reseated in my cell, as I propose shortly to be, I will be mindful of thee, and put up for thy benefit prayers so fervent, that although just now thou appearest to suffer by the loss of thine ass, thou shalt, in ample recompense, receive manifold blessings poured down upon thy family, and upon the joyful harvest of thy fields Take, then, my worthy friend, with a grateful heart, thy wood upon thy shoulder; go, and may peace attend thee!" "But will not you, my good father," replied Gilbert, "abide with us this night? You shall want no accommodation which our cottage can afford; the hour, you see, is waxing late, and should rather suggest to you the thought of seeking for yourself a lodging than of adventuring on the highroad." "Son, thou hast said well," answered the friar; "but what must be my confusion on revisiting the spot where I have dwelt in such disgrace! However, since to endure the survey of the scene of my humiliation may count for a becoming act of resignation, I submit, and with God's permission will follow wherever thou shalt direct." So saying, they proceeded to the house, and when arrived there, Father Timothy pretended to be on terms of intimacy with all the family. He began to talk with great familiarity, first with one, then with another, as if they had been old acquaintances; and when at this they one and all began to express surprise, he, in a joking way, said he wondered at their estrangement towards one who had for a long period been their guest. Gilbert, too, assured them that such was literally the fact; and after keeping them awhile in suspense, informed them who this fellow of a friar was, and under what shape he had lived with them so long. An aged man, Gilbert's father, a young woman, his wife, and two lads, his sons, whose age did not exceed twelve or fourteen, composed this simple group. Open-mouthed, half breathless, and with eyes fixed in motionless attention, each of them listened to Gilbert's story; in their countenances you might have read a mixture of surprise, devotion, and gladness, not without marks of regret and compassion caused by a recollection of the long labours that the poor ass had sustained, the scanty nourishment of bad straw, worse hay, or vile garden weeds which at any time had reached his manger, and the many bastinadoes or goads with which every one of them had often galled or bruised him. In pity for his sufferings past, they strove with each other who should now caress him most, and show him the fondest regards Two pullets, all that remained in the coop, were forthwith put to death, and by their help, together with whatever else the cottage could muster or the neighbourhood contribute, a repast was prepared; to which a bottle of excellent wine, long hoarded by

Gilbert, but which this evening it was his pleasure to uncork in honour of his guest, gave a relish. Now, while the dishes and the cups went round, Father Timothy, naturally sociable and gay, indulged his mirthful vein to a degree that delighted them all, displaying from time to time some of his most original drolleries; not forgetting, however, occasionally to recall his laughing circle to a more serious mood by introducing, in the midst of his facetious stories, some moral or religious precept, that he might appear to them as devout as they found him jovial and entertaining. Yet he could not so far command himself as not to awaken in the mind of Gilbert some little suspicion; and this was principally occasioned by the notice which the friar took of Gilbert's wife, Dame Cicely, who was comely and well-favoured for her station, and whom he eyed with glances that seemed to betoken how gladly he would, if he could, be on terms of greater intimacy with her. She, on her part, with that veneration for the good brethren of the Church which belongs to her sex, and attracted, moreover, by his pleasant manners and conversation, could hardly look upon him with indifference. Of this the watchful husband was more than once aware; and when at last he could no longer contain himself, thus addressed the friar: "My good father, one may easily see how necessary to you is the mortification of the flesh; even after the little indulgence that you have given to it this evening, it displays symptoms of rebellion and threatens you with a relapse into sin. If so recent an escape from your past sufferings prove thus unavailing to defend you from assaults of this nature, grieved am I to tell you that great is your danger of again assuming (aye, and very shortly too) an asinine form; let me therefore advise you to return betimes to-morrow morning to your convent; there stay, and bastinado your carcase without ceasing, unless you prefer that a service so necessary should be performed for you by others." It is wonderful to observe how, at times, a man's passions have the power of quickening his understanding. Gilbert, who, in all his life before had never uttered a sentence which was above the common style of a labouring peasant, now that his slumbering intelligence was roused by the stimulating impulse of anxious jealousy, became all at once a fluent and able speaker. In consequence of an address so cogent and unexpected, the friar was aware that it became him to be upon his guard, and, by words and actions well considered and adapted, to steer clear of a flagellation of the flesh, which during the remainder of the evening he was careful to do. Next morning, after a hearty breakfast, Timothy returned to his convent, and told the father guardian that it was for the benefit of the monastery that it had pleased Heaven to visit him with fever; for that the good peasant, prompted by devotion towards the venerable St. Francis, had presented to the convent that useful animal which he had lent the preceding day to Friar Antony, intelligence which at first greatly rejoiced the worthy guardian; but he subsequently reflecting that it might appear to the world inconsistent with the mendicant life of the brotherhood and with the strictness of their rules to maintain an ass, as if it were from indolence or self-indulgence; that hence might ensue some diminution in the charity of the faithful, and some

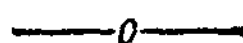
abatement of fervent and zealous regard towards his order, prudently determined that it would be best to sell the ass, without the aid of which the brethren had hitherto gone on very well, and he therefore sent it forthwith, by a trusty person, to a neighbouring fair. There, as chance would have it, that very day was Gilbert, who, as soon as he descried the ass, knew him from the circumstance of his having one of his ears cropped; and going up to him, he placed his mouth close to the animal's ear in the action of talking to him, and whispered very softly, "Lack-a-day, my good father! the rebellious flesh, then, has played thee another trick! Did I not forewarn thee that this would happen?" The ass, feeling a breathing and tickling in his ear, shook his head, as if not assenting. "Deny it not," resumed Gilbert; "I know thee well; thou art the self-same." Again the ass shook his head. "Nay, deny it not; lie not!" rejoined the worthy Gilbert, somewhat raising his voice; "lie not, for that is a great sin; thee it is yes, in spite of thyself, it is thee!" The bystanders seeing a man thus holding a conversation with an ass, believed him crazy, and gathering round him, began to put questions, some about one thing, some about another, and Gilbert advanced the strangest and most unaccountable facts, always maintaining that this was not an ass, however it might bear that resemblance, but in truth a poor miserable Franciscan, who, for his carnal frailties, was now unfortunately a second time transmuted into this form; and he then told from the beginning all the story of the incontinent friar metamorphosed into a beast of burthen. The bursts of laughter which attended this narrative it is needless to describe Poor Gilbert was all that day the butt of the fair. and as the owl draws after her a flight of birds, which flutter around her with various screams and chatterings, so was Gilbert, whichever way he turned, pressed upon by the surrounding crowd, who, with loud jeers and scoffs, made him their laughing-stock. At last some one among them recommended to him again to buy this unlucky animal, to feed him with the best hay he could procure, and by all kinds of good treatment to make him amends for what he had in times past caused him to suffer. This advice pleased Gilbert, who purchased the ass, and led him home. How was Dame Cicely astonished, how also the old father and the two youngsters, to see their well-known ass again!

Such was the welcome they gave him, such the attentions they paid him, that never was ass in the world so fed or so caressed. Plump beyond the costume of asses became his flesh; smooth and shining like velvet his skin; but the perverse animal soon grew vicious and prone to bad habits; already he began to give no little trouble, not to the old man, the wife, and the boys only, but even to Gilbert himself. With savage bites and rude kicks he assailed his generous benefactors, and brayed so loudly and so continually, night and day, that he became a very serious nuisance to the neighbourhood. He more than once broke the halter by which he was tied to the manger in order to satisfy his unruly appetite. How sadly scandalised all the family were at these brutal practices of Friar Timothy it is easy to imagine. Blamable as might seem to them all his former pranks, and

unbecoming, as they doubtless were, in that probationary state to which he was condemned, they were peccadilloes compared with his last offence. Gilbert, finding that day by day he became more intractable, concluded that, persevering as he did in a life thus vicious and depraved, he was condemned never more to fraternise with his Franciscan brethren. He began to suspect, too, that he himself might be in some measure to blame for what had happened. "Asinine flesh and monkish flesh," said he to himself, "must not be too indulgently treated." Gilbert saw the necessity there was for returning in good earnest to that system of flagellation which had on a former occasion produced so beneficial an effect. With this view he again had recourse to the cudgel and to hard labour; but whether it was that the unlucky ass had by a course of gentle treatment become of a constitution too delicate, or whether Gilbert, with an over-ardent zeal, carried his regimen of severity beyond the due limits, certain it is that the afflicted beast, unable to endure a discipline so rigid, soon died, and these good people had to deplore the eternal loss of the soul of Father Timothy, who, in spite of his having undergone two purgatories in an ass's shape, still died impenitent through the execrable vice of gluttony, from which may the Divine grace preserve all good Christians, not excepting the poor brethren of St. Francis!

Scipione Bargagli.

SCIPIONE BARGAGLI.[1]



NEXT in order of our novelists appears the name of the above writer, who ranks among the most distinguished of the sixteenth century for sound learning and eloquence. A few of his novels are esteemed exceedingly beautiful by native writers, though scarcely of a character to conciliate foreign regard, admitting only of a single specimen which could be found at once altogether unexceptionable and pleasing. Yet, solitary as it is, it will be found to possess higher claims to the notice of the English reader than some others of a more voluminous character, from the circumstance of its having given rise to more than one beautiful imitation, at the head of which may be mentioned a very powerful and touching poetical effusion from the pen of Barry Cornwall, while other portions would appear to have been held in view by the genius of the late lamented poet, Keats.

Bargagli was a native of Sienna, and from one of his dialogues, entitled "Il Turamino," published at that city in 1602, he would appear to have assumed the rank of Cavaliero; but upon what grounds he has not stated. In this dialogue he betrays some instances of Siennese provincialisms, though it manifests at the same time his extensive learning and research into the *lingua volgare*, its origin, history, and successive modifications. In addition to this he wrote his novels and several fine orations, one of which was pronounced in praise of the Italian academies, and a curious little work upon mottoes and devices, which he dedicated to the Emperor Rodolph II. He had the honour of presenting one of these works to Ferdinand I., Grand Duke of Tuscany, in which is represented the queen bee surrounded by the swarm, with the motto *Majestate tantum*: an idea so flattering to the Prince as to cause him to have it stamped as a reverse to his own head on some of his most valuable coin. Bargagli was one of the most eminent members of the Academy degl' Intronati at Sienna, and flourished towards the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth century.

In regard to the origin of his novels, he feigns their production during a period of war, when several fortresses in the Siennese territories, and in particular that of Montalcino, being strongly beleaguered by the troops of Don Garzia di Toledo in 1553, the city of Sienna itself was in danger of falling. Reduced to the extremity of famine, he describes the sufferings of the besieged and their heroic constancy in language which, for eloquence and truth of delineation, yields to that of none of

[1] Author of the novels entitled, "Trattenimenti," or Pastimes, printed by the *Giunti*, 1587, 8vo

his contemporaries. With this appalling description he introduces his stories, dividing the work into three parts, containing six novels; all of which, if we are to give credit to the author's advertisement prefixed to the third part, were composed during his early years; an assertion that, with writers of fiction, ought always to be received with some grains of allowance.

PART II. NOVELLA I.

AMONG other families, gentle ladies, that in times gone by are known to have ornamented our native city, one of the most noble, perhaps, was the Saracini, a house which still preserves unsullied its ancient worth and splendour. In the long list of names that constituted its different branches we find mention of one Ippolito, the sole surviving heir of a distinguished cavalier. At the period we are about to refer to, he numbered no more than eighteen years, was extremely graceful and handsome in his person, of elevated mind and intellect, and much esteemed by his friends and fellow-citizens for the vivacity and courtesy of his manners. Now it fell out, as is most frequently the case with youths of a fine temperament, that he became deeply enamoured of one of the most beautiful and attractive girls in all the city, whose surpassing charms and accomplishments were celebrated wherever she had been seen. Her name was Gangenova, the youngest of three daughters left to the care of a widowed mother, the relict of Messer Reame Salimbeni, whose family ranked among the first in Sienna for numerous services rendered to the republic in periods of the greatest peril, though now, along with its arms and palaces, become altogether extinct, nothing of its past grandeur remaining but the name. The delight of all her relations, as well as of the society in which she moved, it was no wonder, then, that the fair Gangenova should so far have enthralled the soul of young Ippolito, that, by frequent contemplation of her beauties and accomplishments, he resolved to run all hazards in order to win her love. Nor had he, in the few opportunities permitted him of conversing with her, any reason for despair, since he rightly interpreted the tones and looks with which she occasionally addressed him. But in consequence of the very strict superintendence of her mother, which was exercised with greater severity over Gangenova than over her elder sisters, the interviews of the lovers were very rare; a system of intolerance so little in accordance with the open and ardent character of Ippolito, that, despising the very particular forms and ceremonies which it exacted, he was apt to grow impatient for the enjoyment of a more unconstrained society with the object he adored. With this view he made known his wishes to the young lady's mother, leaving the terms of their future union, in the most liberal manner, wholly to her, and beseeching her only to grant him a little more of the society of her he loved. What was his surprise to receive a direct refusal, on the ground that it was the lady's duty as a mother to attend first to the disposal of her two elder sisters! an answer that threw the young lover into a paroxysm of mingled rage and despair. The grief of Gangenova was little less than his own,

and her affection, gathering strength by opposition, was indulged with double freedom upon receiving the sanction of such an offer. Aware at the same time that her lover's conduct in attempting to obtain an interview added only to the jealous caution of her mother, she was at a loss in what way to proceed, being so closely watched as scarcely to be allowed to breathe the air, much less to partake of the innocent sports and amusements to which young persons of her age are attached It was impossible, however, to preserve so strict a watch as to deprive them of all kind of mutual intelligence, and Ippolito became acquainted with her unhappy situation. She even entreated of him, in pity to her, that he would discontinue his assiduous attentions, and either absent himself, or feign absence, during a short period, from the city, as she grew fearful of the extremities to which her friends in their anger might proceed. At the same time, she besought him to consider this as a proof of regard, not of coldness or indifference, as she would ever endeavour to show herself grateful, and worthy of the high opinion that he had so kindly and nobly avowed for her. These tidings served at once to increase the passion that Ippolito already entertained, and the unhappiness he felt in being the unwilling cause of the least portion of suffering to her he loved, when he felt as if he could gladly have sacrificed his life to her happiness and repose. Still he exulted in the idea that she returned his affection, and he tried to flatter himself with the prospect of brighter days to come. And in order to convince her of the purity and disinterestedness of his attachment, he resolved, however difficult the task, to obey her wishes, and to leave for awhile his native place, giving out that he was gone upon a pilgrimage to the shrine of San Jacomo of Galicia He was, moreover, desirous of thus proving the sincerity of the affection of her he loved, and of ascertaining whether her regard was likely to increase or diminish by distance, and with this view, having arranged his affairs and bid adieu to all his friends, as if on the eve of a long voyage, he assumed his pilgrim's dress, and, to the surprise and grief of all his acquaintance, left the city. When the unhappy maiden heard of his departure, she shed many tears, regretting that she had ever proposed so harsh and trying an alternative, and upbraided herself as the sole cause of every sinister event that might chance to follow, never having imagined it possible that he would venture upon so painful and hazardous a journey. And in this she reasoned well, for when Ippolito had pursued his way until about sunset, he abandoned the great road, and, striking into one of the thickest woods near at hand, he there deposited his pilgrim's mantle, cowl, and staff, then retracing his steps in another dress, he entered, about the hour when the gates were closed, without observation, into Sienna Proceeding direct to the abode of an old nurse, the only person whom he had admitted into his secret counsel, he there provided himself with everything requisite for his purpose.

Now, near the Church of San Lorenzo was a little country-seat, with a small orchard attached, belonging to Ippolito, both of which he had presented to his aged nurse, who, on her side, had always felt the same affection for him as for an only child. Next to this little tenement lay a spacious and beautiful garden, the property of the mother,

of the fair Gangenova, Ippolito's beloved mistress; and here with her daughters she was often accustomed to take the air and enjoy the fragrance of the new-blown flowers "Surely," thought the gentle and enamoured boy, "here at least we shall hardly be suspected; nobody will believe me bold enough to seek her under her mother's very wing; let us only find an opportunity of conversing with each other, and I cannot fail to discover some means of bringing our difficulties to a happy termination." And solely for this object did he keep himself concealed, like a bird that shuns the eye of day, within the bounds of his little cottage ground, never venturing forth except late in the evening, when, scaling a lofty wall, he descended into the garden of his beloved Gangenova, and approached close under her chamber windows. Up the side of these there chanced to flourish a lofty and lovely mulberry tree, one of whose spacious branches overshadowed the apartment in which she lay, and where her mother kept her, as being the youngest of her charges, constant company by night. Under its shade likewise Ippolito was wont to take his evening station, eager to avail himself of any opportunity of beholding or discovering himself to the object of his attachment. In this way he was soon convinced that the sole chance he had of profiting by his situation was about the hour of sunrise, when he observed the fair girl appear on the balcony overlooking the garden, on which were placed a number of beautiful plants, interspersed with lilies and violets, from which she would cull some of the sweetest to deck her lovely breast and hair. There, too, he observed her amuse herself with a pretty linnet which had nested itself in the noble tree, and which, won by her sweet encouragement, would hop into the window and nestle in her bosom; and it was then his delight to watch her thousand gentle looks and motions, and to imagine how delicious it would be to appropriate to himself the whole of those kisses and caresses. Often had he been on the point of accosting her, however great the risk, when her mother, her sisters, or some one in attendance suddenly appearing, would dash all his hopes, and compel him to be doubly cautious, lest a discovery should be the cause of fresh restraints over his beloved. He next resolved to avail himself of the assistance of his kind old nurse, who, under a variety of pretences, obtained admission into the mother's house, of which she took advantage to gain the ear of the young lady, and inform her of all that her lover had done for her sake; of his passionate attachment and devotion, so well worthy a return, and his extreme desire of beholding her once more Finding her equally delighted and surprised with what she had already heard, the nurse ventured to reveal to Gangenova the place of her Ippolito's concealment; and the pleasure she experienced on finding that he was so near became almost too much for her to support. "Has he not, indeed, deserted me then? is he not really journeying far away, over seas, and in a foreign land, on my account? Oh, dear nurse! tell him that his image is engraven on my soul; that I am too blest, too happy, and never more will give him reason to complain!" Upon hearing these words, the good old dame, thinking that she had happily succeeded in her mission, returned as fast as she could; in order not to forget the least portion of the message, which she well knew would carry such joy to the soul of the young lover.

Ippolito preserved the utmost caution in his proceedings, and it was not long before Fortune seemed to favour his wishes; for keeping watch one evening very assiduously, he saw the arrival of a messenger bearing tidings that the wife of one of the old lady's brothers was taken suddenly ill, and entreated to see the mother of Gangenova without a moment's delay. She was thus compelled to set out and leave her precious charge for one night, at least, to her own discretion; and Ippolito believed that he had at length an opportunity of convincing himself of the reality of his beloved girl's affection for him, by inducing her to embrace the long-wished occasion, and to secure their happiness by flying together and uniting their fate in one. Fired with the hope, he hastened to his usual station underneath the mulberry tree that overspread her chamber windows, and in order better to attract her attention, he shook some of its boughs, imagining that her beloved bird if nestling there would fly to her, and by its little cries and flutterings lead her to appear on the balcony. Not succeeding, however, in this, he hastily ascended the tree, when soon the affrighted bird, flying with timid cries into some neighbouring shrubs, uttered such loud and sorrowful tones as to startle the gentle girl out of her slumber, who, fearing some sad accident had befallen it, hastily ran to the window. With a simple veil thrown over her neck and bosom, and her fine bright tresses carelessly yet gracefully arranged, she appeared in the eyes of her enchanted lover rather like a vision than a creature of mortal beauty, while a mingled look of anxiety and tenderness was impressed upon her countenance. Solicitous for the fate of her little companion, she cast her eyes eagerly on all sides, when, instead of her pretty linnet, the accents of Ippolito, eager to dissipate her alarm, met her ears. The next moment she beheld him nearly at her side, and he succeeded almost in reaching her chamber window, while he attempted to prevent her crying out by addressing her in the lowest and sweetest tone: "Fear not, my gentle Gangenova, it is your Ippolito who speaks; fear not, either for yourself or your little favourite, for soon he will resume his blithesome notes, secure and happy as before. But mine, alas! how different a fate, though far more fond, a thousand times more passionately devoted to you, serving you so long and faithfully! Had you the heart, then, my sweetest, to think I was now taking my woful pilgrimage far from thee, through remote and strange parts, perhaps gone upon my everlasting journey? Oh, no, no! I knew you had not, and I have been near you day and night ever since the period when I left my friends to go upon my feigned pilgrimage. For, alas! when I cannot turn my thoughts from you for a moment, how could I wilfully bend my steps another way? how could I find a moment's repose till I had laid my wearied limbs and my burdened heart as near you as I could possibly venture without quite breaking upon your hallowed rest? Hath not our poor nurse told you all I have done and suffered for your sake, my lonely days and sorrowing yet delicious nights, passed amidst the scenes you have loved, among the very trees, and fruits, and flowers, where you have wandered; nay, in these lofty and verdant branches that so richly and beauteously overshadow the sanctuary of my love? Often have I

seen you at the glimpse of dawn gathering flowers or caressing your bird, yet venturing not to intrude, afraid of calling down still further anger from your jealous guardians upon your innocent head. But my fond and unceasing vows have wearied Heaven at last; your mother is gone, and the hour arrived that is to repay us for a world of anxiety and dread, the fear of losing thee, and all that promised to make life sweet to me. Yet our time is precious, and I came to gather from thine own lips that thou dost indeed honour me with thy love; that thou wilt deign to receive my plighted vows and loyalty unto death. And this I would entreat in the name of all my anguish, all my fears for thee, by the horror of a rival's arms, and by thine own surpassing beauties, that amidst all our city's charms have alone succeeded in riveting my enchanted sight. Yet I know how all unworthy I am; how much better and longer thou deservest to be sought ere won. Still thou knowest my whole life and bearing, though thou canst not form an idea of the sighs and tears I have poured for thee. Pity me, then; and with pity let love and reason, let all the heavenly gifts you possess, plead in my favour, and induce you to receive me as your favoured and honoured lord." Here he ceased, waiting with eager and trembling looks for a reply; while the beautiful Gangenova, overpowered on her side by a thousand wild and sweet emotions, was almost unable to articulate a word. Having descended into the balcony, on her sudden alarm, to recover her favourite bird, she had attempted on first hearing Ippolito's voice to fly; yet surprise and terror chained her to the spot; for having read the fabled metamorphoses of plants into mortals, and human beings into plants, on hearing a voice from the mulberry tree, her blood began to run cold, and her attempt to call out died away ere it passed her lips. Yet there was something in the tone that convinced her she need not fear, and gradually recovering her confidence, her heart seemed actually to swim in a tide of rapture before her noble lover had concluded his passionate appeal. "Dear Ippolito," she at length replied, "it grieves me that we are so situated that it would be dangerous to tell all I have thought and felt since last we met and parted, much less the delight I have at finding you safe and near me once more. But, alas! this is no place for you; speed away, I beseech you, and think me neither hasty nor unkind, as indeed I esteem all your love and goodness to me as tenderly as I ought. But I fear for you, my kind Ippolito, and I entreat you to bid me one adieu, and let me see you safely depart." At this moment, hearing a noise in the antechamber, and fearful lest her sisters should approach, Gangenova hastily drew back, while Ippolito, imagining that it proceeded from her room, and hearing a rustling noise continue for some time, was seized with sudden suspicions of some rival being harboured there, either by her sisters or the fair Gangenova herself. Maddened by this idea, he no longer remained master of himself, and in his attempt to reach her window from the tree so as to obtain a view of what was passing, such was the hurry of his spirits, that, missing his footing, he fell to the ground.

Startled at the terrific sound, the fair girl again rushed forward, bending as far as possible over the balcony, and calling on the name

of Ippolito in a subdued and gentle tone; but no longer did the sound reach his enraptured ear where he lay deprived of sense upon the cold earth. Suspense and terror seized upon the heart of the tender girl when she received no answer; love urged her to afford him her immediate assistance, while fear of discovery restrained her steps. Unable, however, longer to control her fears for his safety, she hastily descended into the garden by a back staircase rarely made use of, having remained from ancient times as a retreat in seasons of trouble, and having its outlet at the extreme part of the garden. And there, alas! she found him stretched under the mulberry tree, lying cold and pallid, apparently deprived not only of sense but of life itself.

Almost as insensible as he, she threw herself at his side. Upon recovering her consciousness, showers of tears expressed the intensity of her sufferings, her cries would have moved rocks and beasts of prey to pity, such were the piteous tones in which these words were uttered: "Sweet Heavens! what dreadful thing hath happened? What malignant star hath struck with death one of the best and noblest hearts that ever beat? Oh, where is the soul that but now shone in thy face? Wretch that I am, shall I never behold it more? Art thou fled, for ever fled, sweet guardian of my honour, my love, and peace? But what will betide them now when every tongue will be busy with my fame? Whither shall I turn for help, reduced to such sad extremities as I now am?" And while abandoned to her woe, the hapless girl thus poured her lamentations to the night, she never ceased her endeavours to restore the object of them by every means in her power, rubbing his heart and temples, joining his hands and lips to her own, and trying to breathe her soul into his. Finding that he yet gave no signs of life, she sweetly folded him in her arms and bathed his inanimate features with her tears. Ippolito's soul, just on the point of taking wing, seemed to welcome so much bliss; and suddenly recovering his suspended powers, he heard the sweet words she uttered, and found himself alive in her arms. It was then he felt himself amply repaid for all the trials he had undergone, the sweetness and ecstasy of the reward far surpassing all he had been able to conceive, in breathing his vows thus closely into her ear. The moment before, she was about to transfix her breast with her lover's sword in a paroxysm of despair; the next she found herself pressed to his breathing bosom, receiving, as it were, the gift of two lives restored to her at once. For some time they both remained doubtful whether to believe that all was real, and gazed upon each other as if in a dream, until the fresh spirit of their joy being somewhat abated, they sat down by each other, side by side, with that serene and ineffable pleasure which the imagined certainty of their bliss inspired. But it was destined, alas! to be of short duration; a voice was heard calling upon the name of Gangenova, gradually approaching nearer and nearer, so that they were compelled to part almost without bidding each other adieu. The poor girl hastened, trembling, by the same path that she had left the house: she fancied in the disorder of her spirits that she suddenly heard the terrific howlings of wild beasts, accompanied by the most dismal screams and cries; and such was the impression they made upon her

imagination, just after having taken leave of Ippolito, as to deprive her of the power of motion. It was long before she recovered even strength enough to regain her apartment, and with panting breast and dishevelled hair she threw herself upon the couch, still unable to banish the terrific ideas that haunted her imagination.

In the meanwhile, the sisters of Gangenova, being likewise freed from the superintendence of their mother, had been innocently enjoying themselves in their chamber, frequently calling the fair girl by her name to come and join in their diversion. Paying little heed to her silence, they continued for some time to amuse themselves with their games, until one of them, by way of adding a little novelty to the scene, crept forward in the dark intending to surprise her in her own room. Still receiving no reply, she ran for a light, and on returning found her sister stretched upon the bed, resembling rather a lifeless statue than a breathing human form. Calling her second sister in great alarm, they made eager inquiries into the cause of her agitation, feeling assured that something extraordinary must have happened. The poor girl was equally unwilling and unable to reply, and her sisters, in some anxiety, despatched a messenger for their mother, who lost no time in returning to resume her maternal charge. With a little more authority, she insisted upon knowing the cause of her alarm, and upbraided her sisters severely for not keeping a more vigilant watch. Gangenova declared herself quite unable to account for the manner in which she had been affected, and the others professed equal ignorance as to the cause of her indisposition. In this dilemma her mother had recourse to the advice of the most expert physicians the city had to boast, which brought no alleviation, however, to her daughter's alarming symptoms, not one of them being able to discover that her illness was owing to some sudden surprise, while she, far more jealous of her fair fame than of her life, concealed from every one the real cause of her sufferings. Growing rapidly worse, she became extremely anxious to behold once more her beloved Ippolito, and recollecting the old nurse, she instantly sent for her, entreating that she would as soon as possible acquaint him with her situation, and find some means by which they might at least meet to take an eternal farewell. Upon receiving these sad tidings, Ippolito grew deadly pale and trembled, though at the same moment he hastened to comply with her wishes. He assumed the dress of a poor traveller, with a false beard, so as to render it almost impossible to recognise him, and set out to beg alms at several houses adjacent to that of his beloved. As he approached the latter, the lady of the mansion herself made her appearance, half wild and distracted at the situation of her loveliest daughter. Informed of the occasion of her grief, the wily pilgrim, availing himself of the circumstance, bade her not despair, as the power of the Lord was infinite, and His goodness equal to His power. Moreover, with His aid, he had himself become skilled in all the virtues of almost all the plants under the sun, and had devoted his knowledge of herbs and juices to the relief of his unhappy fellow-creatures, besides possessing secrets adapted to every species of disease. The poor credulous old lady raised her hands to heaven in gratitude upon hearing such

consolatory words, vowed that he had been peculiarly sent by Providence, and insisted that he should be instantly introduced to her unhappy girl The moment Ippolito beheld her, he perceived that the tidings he had received were indeed too true. So much was he shocked, that he could with difficulty support his character; more particularly when he saw, from the brightening features of his beloved, that she instantly recognised him. Taking, then, the hand of the suffering girl within his own, as if to feel how fast her life-blood ebbed, he begged her attendants to stand apart while he proceeded to try his secret prayers and charms in his own way. Ippolito was thus enabled to learn the real source of her illness from her own lips. Beholding him with a mixture of tenderness and pity that added momentary lustre to her dying charms, she attempted, in those low soft tones he so much loved, to infuse balm into his wounded spirit. Painfully sensible of the extent of his loss, Ippolito from very grief was unable to utter a word, much less to ask the needful questions of his beloved. Wildly pressing his hand, she besought him never to forget the tender love he had borne her, and which she had seldom been happy enough to tell him how warmly and deeply she returned. "For joyful, oh! very joyful, my Ippolito," she continued, "would my departure have been to me before now, had not solicitude for your fate detained me. As it is, I die content, nay, grateful, for two unexpected benefits: the one to have seen you thus, to hear you, and feel your hand in mine; and the other, to know that I lived and that I died beloved by my most noble and faithful-hearted Ippolito!" It was now that the latter attempted to console and encourage her, declaring it would be his only pride to fulfil her wishes in the minutest point; but here his voice failing him through his fast-coming tears and sobs, he laid his aching head down by the side of his beloved's, and there remaining for a short time as he breathed forth a soul-distracting adieu, he raised it again painfully, passed his hand over his eyes, and looking his last look, left the apartment. He then joined her weeping mother, and so far from holding out any hope, he said that pity for the sad and dying state in which he had found the poor patient had drawn scalding tears from his eyes. And he had not long been gone before the gentle spirit of his love, as if unable to continue longer without him, prepared to take wing, and in a few hours actually fled, as if to prepare in some happier scene a mansion of rest for their divided loves For the wretched Ippolito, though able to bear up long enough to behold her beloved relics consigned to earth, had no sooner witnessed all the virtues and charms he had so fondly esteemed and loved for ever entombed in the vault of the Salimbeni, than, just as the ceremony was about to close, he fell dead at the foot of her marble monument. So strange and sudden an event threw the surrounding company, by whom it was regarded as little less than a miracle, into the utmost surprise and confusion, all of them believing that Ippolito Saracini was then on his way to the shrine of St. Giacomo of Galicia. His unhappy parents, hearing of this his untimely end, hastened to join their tears with those of the mother of the beauteous Gangenova, by whose side the faithful Ippolito was laid.

Giovanni Bottari.

GIOVANNI BOTTARI.

THIS distinguished writer and prelate was born towards the close of the seventeenth century, and we find honourable mention made of him by many of his contemporaries, and by almost all subsequent literary historians. He was more celebrated, however, as a scholar and for his ecclesiastical and antiquarian researches than for his lighter compositions in fiction. From the specimen which he afforded of them, displaying equal ability and purity of taste, we have only to regret his want of leisure to amuse and gratify his countrymen with more abundant proofs of his genius in the same department. His productions of this description are said to have been composed with a view of attempting a new "Decameron," upon the same plan in regard to its ease and simplicity of language, but of an opposite tendency, so as at once to act as an antidote to its evil and a preservative of its good points. We are informed by Poggiali that he was in possession of the original MS., in addition to several of Bottari's lectures, illustrative of his own novels, as well as of other of his countrymen's. An account of his works by the learned canon, Moreni, is to be found in his invaluable *Catalogue raisonnée* of the productions of illustrious writers of Tuscany. From these, which are far too numerous to notice here, we gather that he was still more celebrated as a critic and historian than as a novelist. He wrote the Life of his predecessor, Sacchetti, with an account of his novelle, published at Florence in 1725. He also gave lectures upon those of Boccaccio, wrote the eulogy of Cosmo III., Grand Duke of Tuscany; the Lives of Varchi, of Galantini, and Giuseppe del Papa. His notes in Latin upon the Bellarmine controversy discover him to have been an excellent scholar, while his dissertation upon Dante displays a no less familiar acquaintance with the classic beauties of his native tongue.

NOVELLA I.

YOU must here be informed, that in the time of St. Jerome, one of the most learned doctors of the Holy Church, there dwelt in Maronia, a village not far from the city of Antioch, a poor man, who supported himself upon the produce of a little farm which he cultivated with his own hands. He had an only son, of the name of Malco, whom he supported, as well as his wife, in pretty easy circumstances; this child

being the sole pledge of their affection, and from his pleasing and excellent disposition the delight of both his parents. Having attained to years of maturity, their favourite object was now to behold him married; and with this view his father one day thus affectionately addressed him: "As you know, my dear son, that you have neither brother nor sister, and are now arrived at manhood, while your parents are fast verging to old age, it would much gratify us both could we see you united according to your wishes in wedlock. As the consolation of our declining years, we shall thus be delighted to witness your happiness, bringing up your children, the sweetest solace of this our mortal state, in the fear of the Lord; whereas, should you defer such an engagement to a later period, you will encounter infinitely more risks and trouble, as may be learned from numerous examples which it were needless to specify."

After listening attentively to the kind advice offered by his father, Malco, with the greatest respect and reverence, begged to decline his proposal, alleging as a reason that he wished to devote himself wholly to a religious life—a resolution which gave equal surprise and concern to both his parents. They therefore gently reproached him for indulging wishes that involved the failure of their name, dying without any legitimate successors, of whom all men are more or less desirous; and urged besides a variety of other reasons, which were applied with as little success. All they could gather from him was, that upon mature deliberation he had resolved to provide only for the good of his soul, to the exclusion of all earthly considerations. In spite of all their tears and entreaties they could obtain only the same answer, and their threats proved as unavailing as their prayers.

Both parties persisting in their respective resolutions, to their mutual annoyance, Malco, in order to avoid its perpetual recurrence, as well as to execute the object he had in view, resolved to abandon his native place, which he took an early opportunity of doing. But not venturing to depart into the East from a dread of encountering the contending armies of the Romans and Persians, then engaged in cruel and sanguinary warfare, he took a secret route towards the desert of Calcis, and, after a few days of patient toil, he found himself amidst its vast solitude, relieved only by a solitary monastery which he discovered in the distance, where, the holy brotherhood receiving him on his arrival, he resolved to submit himself to their most rigid rules and discipline. Joyfully assuming the monk's habit, he soon began to set an example to the whole fraternity, by the severity of his mortifications, his continual fasts and watches, which had shortly the effect of consuming all the vigour and freshness of his youth, along with his natural appetites, which he completely subdued by confining himself to the very scanty fare earned by his own hands.

Having continued this mode of life for some years, he accidentally heard of his father's decease, and feeling for the situation of his widowed mother, as well as being desirous of securing his little heritage, which he wished to convert into money as alms for the poorer brethren and other charitable purposes, he shortly came to the resolution of returning home. Going accordingly to the abbot, he entreated

his permission to depart, at the same time bidding him a holy farewell. The good father, grown grey in experience and wisdom, was sore displeased to hear of his poor monk's intention, and pronounced it to be nothing better than a temptation of the devil, presented in this specious shape of charity the more surely to beguile his soul; affirming that his only chance was to resist the ancient adversary in the outset, in default of which so many wise and holy men, even the fathers themselves, had oftentimes been deceived; and that the more pious and excellent the object he had in view appeared to be, the more wily and diabolical was the plan laid for his spiritual destruction. This the holy father laboured to make manifest by many notable instances and examples; but all in vain to deter the good monk, who was obstinately bent upon returning home. For, though the eloquence of his superior appeared like the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, it had not the effect of shaking his resolution a jot, not even when his kind benefactor had recourse to prayers and entreaties, and charged him with the greatest ingratitude in thus turning his back upon the monastery and the poor brethren, who had so hospitably received and sheltered him. He would, moreover, bring into peril both soul and body, and provoke his eternal perdition, by wilfully traversing a country lying between Baria and Edessa, beset with heathen robbers and spoilers, who delighted to shed the blood of the innocent worshippers of the true faith. "Besides," added the good father, appealing to the highest authority, "no man putting his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of heaven; and if he persist in this line of conduct, like the dog returning to his vomit, he will soon become the lost sheep of the fold, exposed to all the fury of ravenous wolves."

Malco, nevertheless, being by no means of a soft and yielding disposition, was neither to be persuaded nor terrified out of his purpose; and embracing the worthy abbot, who consigned him over to speedy destruction, he boldly set forth upon his route, heedless of the entreaties of the whole brotherhood. As a precaution against the Moors, he united himself to a body of travellers about to proceed in the same direction, who agreed to support and defend one another. The caravan consisted of about sixty souls, men and women, of various ranks, and their courage was speedily put to the test; for they had hardly proceeded a day's journey, when they were suddenly assailed by a band of infidels, who sprung upon them in vast numbers from an ambush, crying, "Death, death to the unbelieving dogs!" at the same moment seizing their knives, and rapidly executing their threats. Great indeed was the outcry, the consternation, and confusion; some flying, some perishing, and some glad to be made prisoners.

Upon a division of booty after the tragedy, it happened that our friend Malco, along with a young woman, fell to the lot of one master, who, mounting his prisoners upon the same camel, took his way over a long and barren waste, beyond a vast river, during which they encountered infinite toil and trouble. And when they at length attained their destination, amidst some fertile solitudes in the heart of the desert, the poor monk was set to guard his heathen master's flocks, transformed into a shepherd boy; but possessing uninterrupted

time and solitude, he soon became reconciled to his situation and quite contented, believing himself now better entitled to the character of a monk than he had ever before been; a monk, in the Greek tongue, signifying nothing more nor less than a recluse. It thus became delightful to him to dwell upon the lives of the holy patriarchs, as described in the Old Testament, which it was his great ambition to emulate as nearly as possible, having merely dreamed or read of them in his convent, but never flattering himself that he should have the happiness so nearly to resemble them. Adding to this consideration the dangers through which he had passed, he had good reason to feel satisfied with his condition, and offer up thanks to Heaven for his preservation in hymns and psalms, which he could repeat extempore in great number. Too happy had he been could he have continued in this tranquil state, had Fortune been so inclined; but she was busily preparing new trials for him, while he imagined himself beyond the reach of her malice in the deep sequestered solitudes he so much enjoyed. For his master, becoming sensible of his faithful and assiduous services in the care and increase of his flocks, felt more kindly disposed towards him, and desirous of rewarding his poor slave in a manner which he thought at once agreeable and profitable. With this view, summoning his female slave into his presence, he addressed the pious Malco as follows: "I am so well satisfied, Malco, with your conduct, that I am resolved to give you some signal proof of my favour, insomuch that if you had before a motive for promoting my interests, it will render you in future doubly assiduous. Behold, I am willing to give you this fair Christian here for your wedded wife; you are fellow-prisoners, and I cannot do better than unite your fortunes in one, so that you may henceforward, though condemned to servitude, pass your days in peace and comfort in the joys of domestic life."

The poor monk was sadly grieved and disconcerted at this proposal, the worst in his opinion that he had to dread. He instantaneously declared his dislike to it, adding that he was prohibited by the rules of his order even from indulging such a wish; and, besides, the lady in question had a husband most likely living, taken prisoner at the same time with themselves, though disposed of to a different master. Incensed at receiving the least opposition on the part of his slave, his master, giving way to an impulse of passion, suddenly drew his knife for the purpose of despatching Malco on the spot. And this he would infallibly have done, had not his pious herdsman sought refuge behind the slighted lady, whom he was glad enough in this exigence to embrace; and his dread was such that he became unable to utter a word, which his savage master luckily took for an acknowledgment of his error and an inclination to submit. Concluding such to be the case, he ordered both parties to be conducted home to Malco's hut, where they were safely secured for the night. In this great extremity the unfortunate monk stationed himself as far as possible from the hated object of his fears, considering her in the light of his spiritual adversary, whom he was to resist by every means in his power. He appeared to regard her with mingled scorn and detestation, which the fair Christian on her part returned; and, buried in their own

thoughts, they sorrowfully contrasted their late freedom and happiness with their present miserable lot Such, indeed, was its impression upon the spirits of the pious Malco, that added to his dread of being compelled sooner or later to violate his vows, he resolved to make an end of all his troubles at a single blow. With more of the hero than the Christian, he was already seen brandishing the fatal steel, and after muttering a few hasty prayers, he turned to his companion. "Fear me not," he said, "unhappy woman; but fare you well I am going to rid myself of this world, preferring to lose my life rather than to preserve it by entering into the marriage state." Hearing his desperate intentions, and observing the deadly weapon glaring through the darkness that surrounded them, the kind lady seized the despairing man in her arms, and holding him as straitly as she could, she at the same time conjured him to have mercy on his own soul, and then falling at his feet, she thus continued: "Nay, slay not thyself, my good Malco, but take heed, lest, in attempting to save thy soul alive, thou dost not by those very means contrive to lose it. If it be only a wish to preserve thy long-treasured virtue that tempts thee to such despair, pray let thy mind be easy on that score, for, believe me, I will sooner consent to be cut into pieces than sin against that commandment of God which thou well wottest of, being determined to preserve my conjugal faith at all hazards So listen to me, and be at peace, for I will teach thee how to arrange thy affairs as well as my own in such sort as to leave us both at liberty to pursue our respective inclinations without incurring the tremendous vengeance of our lord and master. Let us affect submission to his wishes, while we continue to live with the affection only of brother and sister for each other, and in this way our misfortunes ought to render us dear to one another." Such a proposal Malco received with gratitude, and they contrived to deport themselves so tenderly and affectionately one towards the other as completely to impose upon their master, who, pleased with this proof of their submission, every day granted more and more liberty to their actions Some years elapsed in this manner without either of them having occasion to accuse the other of a wish to infringe upon the original conditions, their master indulging only a little surprise at not being sooner presented with a young progeny of slaves But the pious brother, as well as his sister in captivity, becoming weary of the privations they endured, one day as our hero was standing in a desponding attitude alone in the desert, leaning upon his crook and gazing wistfully upon the sky (and little else, indeed, there was to be seen), he began to ponder seriously upon his past life Surrounded by his flock, he dwelt upon his present lot as contrasted with the pleasant life he had before led with those holy monks by whom he had been so kindly educated and cherished. The figure of his venerable abbot appeared in all the odour of sanctity before him, and there were moments when his charitable acts and converse came fresh over his memory, seeming to say that he had wilfully forfeited the salvation which he would have secured to him, besides plunging his saintly director in holy grief for his premature departure.

While revolving these bitter thoughts, he chanced to cast his eyes

intrepidity, she did. In this manner were they borne a long way down the river, until they found an opportunity of landing upon the opposite side, and flattered themselves that they should thus succeed in avoiding pursuit, as their master would be unable to track them beyond the banks of the river. Although they had the misfortune to lose the chief part of their stores during their passage, they pursued their way, allowing scarcely any time for refreshment or for rest, and dreading to look either behind or before them, lest they should behold the relentless features of their incensed master, or of robbers still more ferocious. The next day the heat of the sun was so excessive as to compel them to proceed for the most part by night, when they were infested with a variety of noxious insects, birds, snakes, and animals. On the third day of their weary pilgrimage, while journeying between hope and despair, and at times stealing anxious looks around them, they heard footsteps hastily approaching, which from their direction they judged to be in pursuit. The form of their master seeming to rise before them, added wings to their flight; and such was the terror he inspired, that, losing all their presence of mind, they no longer knew the path they took, but eagerly looked out on all sides for some place of refuge. At the moment they found their pursuers fast gaining upon them, they perceived an immense cave not far from them, on the right hand, into which they rushed with the boldness of despair. But before they had entered very far, a fresh cause of alarm arose, even greater than the former: they discovered it to be in possession of poisonous reptiles and savage beasts, whose growlings were heard resounding in the distance. For such wild and deeply concealed caverns are eagerly resorted to during the hot and fiery season by the most ferocious animals, on account of their comparative coolness. Affrighted at the appalling noises around them, the fugitives venturing to advance no farther, hid themselves in a little recess on one side of the passage, and sunk almost lifeless upon the ground. In the meanwhile, their master and his attendant, for indeed it was no other, had approached the entrance of the cave, tracking the footsteps of their victims through the sand. Dismounting from their camels, the master ordered his servant to enter with his drawn sword, while he stood with a large knife at the mouth of the cavern, prepared to give them no agreeable reception. Now it so happened that the attendant, advancing in the obscurity of the place, passed by the recess where Malco and his companion lay. Impelled forward by the threats of his master, he began in his turn to call out with a loud voice, in order to affright the fugitives from their hiding-place, and penetrated into the more remote parts of the cavern, exclaiming, "Vile wretches and slaves as you are, do you hear your master's voice? Come forth, I say, and receive the just chastisement of your crimes! come out, and see what sort of a reception he will give you." He had hardly pronounced these words, that made the vaults of the cave echo back the sound, when, approaching the lair of a fierce and terrific lioness, she suddenly sprang upon the wretched slave, and, fastening upon his throat, bore him, howling, into the remotest recesses of that dismal place. His master, after awaiting his return, or the appearance of the fugitives,

during a long period in vain, began to fear that his faithful slave had been overpowered by the other two, and, without reflecting longer upon the matter, he rushed forward, brandishing his huge knife, and shouting out his name, into the cave. At the same time he used the most opprobrious epithets towards his fugitive slaves, who lay trembling with dread upon the ground; but he had not proceeded far beyond their hiding-place, when the same ferocious lioness that had just despatched his servant stood before his path. Before he could move a single step, he felt her talons at his throat, and in the next instant lay a corpse at her feet. The furious animal, supposing her retreat had been discovered, then rushed out of the cavern, bearing her cubs in her teeth, and, without returning to feast upon the dead bodies of the master and his slave, sought out for herself another lair. During the whole time that this fearful tragedy was transacting, Malco and his companion had remained still as death, witnessing, at the same time, every circumstance as it occurred, while their hearts beat fearfully at the tremendous threats of the master and his servant as they were seen brandishing their weapons, and at the sudden and dreadful appearance and the howlings of the lioness, which made their very hair to stand on end Often was the wretched woman on the point of giving utterance to her fears, had not Malco restrained her; and when they believed the danger to be passed, they were scarcely less affected than before, and offered up thanks to Heaven for their deliverance, which they continued until the evening, not venturing sooner out of their hiding-place. They then mounted the camels of the deceased, which they found supplied with provisions and wine, and recovering their spirits sufficiently to continue their journey, arrived amidst hymns of praise and gratitude about nightfall at the outposts of the Roman army. An account of their long sufferings and adventures being conveyed to the tribune, he gave them a gracious hearing, and allowed them an escort as far as Mesopotamia, where they were recommended to the charge of the proconsul Labino. There, hearing of the decease of his worthy benefactor the abbot, Malco continued his journey into Maronia, along with the companion who had shared so many troubles with him, devoting himself wherever he came to the service of Heaven and the Church, and preserving his virtue free from the contamination of worldly vanities.

Albergati Capacelli.

ALBERGATI CAPACELLI.

THE subject of the present notice may be ranked in the list of those amateur authors who flourished in Italy towards the latter part of the eighteenth century, and who sought to revive the superior energy and nature of her earlier poets and novelists. Most of these being men of rank, such as the Marchese Maffei, the two Pindemonti, Alfieri, and others of less note, they were enabled in some measure to succeed in their object, and have since been followed by such names as Foscolo, Manzoni, Monti, who have achieved what their predecessors began, and infused a nobler and better spirit into the decaying energies of their national literature.

The Marchese Capacelli entered upon his literary career as a dramatist, and, as we learn from M. Sismondi, some of his compositions were among the most distinguished that appeared at the annual meetings for the distribution of prizes instituted by the Duke of Parma about the year 1770. One of these dramas, entitled, "The Prisoner," merited the laurel crown in the year 1774; nor was Capacelli considered much inferior in other branches of composition The few novels that he produced are no less remarkable for their taste and spirit than for the genuine pathos and good feeling which pervade them. Of these it may be remarked, as well as of his dramas, which are pretty numerous, that they are distinguished by their "peculiar ease, versatility, and wit," however little they may be adapted to the taste of foreign readers, owing to those national distinctions and modes of expression which constitute so much of the native humour of a people As an author, he possessed equal energy and sensibility, whether we view him in the light of a novelist or of a tragic and comic writer. "A man of the world," continues M. Sismondi, "and conversant with the best society which Italy afforded, he employed the opportunities he thus enjoyed to observe life, and to describe it with impartiality and truth."

The most successful of Capacelli's pieces was one entitled "Dei Convulsioni," in which he took occasion to rally those affected disorders of the nerves so fashionably prevalent about the end of the last century, and succeeded in deterring the voluntary victims from making them the pretence of further usurpation of authority over their husbands and their lovers, thus freeing the people of Italy from the new yoke with which they were threatened. He distinguished himself also by his critical taste and acquirements, as appears from the remarks which he made upon his own works, and from his correspondence with Count Alfieri.—*Sismondi*, "*Literature of the South of Europe*."

NOVELLA II.

I WILLINGLY leave to gloomy and cold-blooded reasoners, who make a merit of reviling human nature, the unpleasant task of proving that man's life is one continued chain of woes, that there is nothing like pleasure he can call his own, and that only fools go in pursuit of it: moreover, that were he sensible of his real condition, his thoughts would be incessantly dwelling upon objects of sorrow, wretchedness, and despair. Strange were such views of life founded in truth, and stranger that they should ever be countenanced and adopted! Then why is it attempted to affect the minds of youth with similar impressions, so early introducing to their notice examples of this nature, and preparing to sacrifice the future victims, as it were, upon the altar of our own extravagant opinions? It would be far more laudable to exhibit life as capable of affording the sweetest pleasures and the most exquisite sources of delight and satisfaction. And, in truth, as young people are supposed to feel pleasure without comprehending or being able to define it, so philosophers, who greatly boast their knowledge and exact definition of it, it is conjectured, as rarely feel it. It might be desirable to reconcile the two a little more with each other, and point out, without much subtlety or research of reasoning, how they might contrive to attain such a blessing more equally, converting our philosophers into a kind of pioneers, and young people into docile followers, while the path is made common to both, so that all should infallibly arrive in the same time and method at the long-sought-for delicious goal. We should not then as now, perhaps, so often perceive full-grown, sensible men exacting from poor boys what it is out of their power to perform, and these again wishing their superiors to descend to trifles that they are too apt to despise, the one party incapable of estimating the respective importance or levity of the other's pursuits. Were we, then, to fix upon some point of mutual agreement whence to trace the origin of our most pleasing emotions, some actions calculated to impart the purest feelings of delight, we should directly pronounce beneficence to constitute that great source of pleasure from which human beings, of whatever age or sex, may derive the most unmingled gratification. Like an harmonious instrument, the mind, subject to its influence, will produce the sweetest music that can salute a mortal ear, replying to the hand of a skilful artist in tones of the most tender and grateful pathos. And truly, in proportion as our hearts are taught to listen to its dictates and follow its impulses, we may be said to have created within ourselves a new sense, capable of being gratified with an inexhaustible fund of happiness. The following account may perhaps serve to exemplify this a little more clearly.

In one of the pleasantest cities of Italy resided a young cavalier of noble birth, rich, and highly esteemed no less by his friends than by his country. Yet Rodrigo had numbered no more than five-and-twenty summers; he was his own master, the only one of his family, extremely well educated, and the slave of no particular passion. His dispositions, on the other hand, were good, more bent upon reputation than

upon pleasure, and he was everywhere received with the most gratifying marks of attention. Strange, then, that with all these advantages he should feel an unaccountable tedium and dissatisfaction, and should consume a large portion of his time in idle melancholy and regret, which he was careful at the same time to conceal from observation, aware that it would excite only feelings of pity or reproach. For Fortune indeed appeared to have showered her choicest favours upon him; and while he taxed himself with ingratitude, he was still unable to master those moods of the mind that seemed to come and go at their pleasure, producing an internal conflict that intruded on his most peaceful and most agreeable hours. Wearied out at last with the continual recurrence of these feelings, he would vainly attempt to define their cause, instituting the most rigid examination into his past life and conduct, and giving vent to his regrets much to the following purport: "Whence, alas! springs the emptiness and dissatisfaction that I find in all that surrounds me? this feeling of heaviness, coldness, and disgust? I pursue the same route as others, in search of the same objects, and yet those objects never seem to afford me nearly the same degree of interest and amusement Surely men must either deceive me by affecting more pleasure than they really feel; or I do worse, by imposing upon myself pastimes and amusements that are none, alas! to me. In the midst of such scenes, enjoyed by some with the utmost zest, in the dance, the gaming-table, or the turf, winner or loser, I turn away with a sense of weariness and contempt that I can with difficulty repress; the theatre and conversazione are still more trying, and I come back more wretched than I went I wish I could know what others feel and think: it might perhaps be some alleviation to find that they are as miserable as myself. At least I should like to terminate this state of suspense, though I am inclined to think it would turn out as I conjecture; that there is no real pleasure in all these frivolous pursuits, which consume our substance and our time, and that in the midst of dissipation we are all only acting a part, and trying which best can impose upon the world. Once, indeed, I imagined that happiness consisted in getting time over as fast as possible, and avoiding serious reflection as the greatest evil: but how have I benefited by it? Idiot that I was, not to see that life, 'which passeth like a shadow,' is of itself short enough without our studying the art of curtailing it; but rather how we may so dispose of it that not a moment should be uselessly or criminally employed! Arouse thee, therefore, Rodrigo! a large portion of thy days is already flown, perhaps one-half, or more, or perhaps the whole. But listening only to the dictates of reason and philosophy, why should I longer continue a mode of life that oppresses and chagrins me like the present? why not turn my back upon the city, and the summer friends that flatter me the more surely to betray me, inviting me to feasts and spectacles in order the better to prey upon my fortunes? Did I feel happy, it were well enough; but it is paying too dearly for mere weariness and dissatisfaction. Away to the country, then, to the solitude of my old woods; let me try what Nature and the air of heaven will do for me; live more like a reasonable being, and set the

example to others, if true pleasure should indeed be found there" With this resolution he set off the next day, a fine spring morning, after having arranged his private affairs, to one of his villas, very delightfully situated at a considerable distance from the city. There for a little while he found relief from the change; and apparently contented, if not happy, he adopted a new plan of life, dividing his hours between religious and literary exercises, in walking and the chase, keeping his mind at the same time free from the wilder passions, from jealousy, rivalry, and ambition, and surveying with the eye of a disinterested spectator the course of human passions and events. He was at first apprehensive of being interrupted in his retirement by some of his acquaintance; but in this he was agreeably deceived, for the world takes little interest in the quiet and well-regulated occupations of a sensible man, and considers such a life, especially in early years, as little less than actual burial alive.

In about a month, just as he was flattering himself that he had become reconciled to his new system, he felt a slight recurrence of his old feelings, which, increasing upon him by degrees, revived all the internal wretchedness and commotion under which he had formerly laboured. Yet he found within himself no cause for repentance or remorse; his life was blameless, but an insuperable weariness and indifference poisoned all his hours Often he was on the point of despair, and it was only a sense of religion that prevented its worst effects, inspiring him with a humble yet zealous faith to seek that relief for a wounded spirit where alone it is to be found "Ye pitying Heavens!" he cried, "still wearied with my sighs and prayers, one further boon alone do I venture to ask, that in the few brief days I may have yet to number upon earth, I may be led to know in what true happiness, if such in this world there be, really consists!" He continued some time in a devout and imploring attitude after uttering these words, nor was it long before he seemed to hear a voice that whispered. "Go forth, seek, and you will find it" The next moment, as if inspired with new strength, he rose and sallied forth, though undecided what path to pursue. The idea of his usual pleasures and exercises, however, had no place in his soul, he felt an indefinable tenderness and elevation of spirit, as he walked with a slow and mournful step, casting at times an anxious and inquiring look on the scenery around him, covered with the tender and immature verdure of spring. His feelings growing more warm and enthusiastic, he proceeded at a more rapid pace, and passed the usual bounds to which his walks had been limited. The day was dying away, a dubious twilight alone remained; just enough to enable him to descry the different paths that lay before him Resolving not to return to the villa that night, unless he met with some key to the mystery in which he seemed involved, he abandoned himself to chance, pursuing the route that lay nearest to him, in which he confidently advanced. Though surprised by the night, he relaxed nothing of his vigour and resolution. Utter darkness, or the splendour of noonday, in the excited state of his feelings, were equally the same. No recollections of a painful nature, no crimes disturbed the serenity of his soul; he was innocent, and no vain fears haunted his imagina-

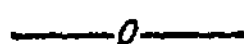
tion; for spectres either exist not, or are only permitted to torment the bad. Neither were the roads infested with banditti, the governor having already extirpated them from the state. Suddenly, however, upon the left he encounters a huge mass of rocks, rising as it were amidst a few surrounding shrubs and trees; and soon he hears the sound of lamentable voices, issuing as he imagined from some horrid cavern, whose tones pierce him to the heart. He feels a strange tumult in his breast; while an indescribable impulse hurries him forward to approach the place whence the sounds seem to proceed. He hastens to the spot: and beholds, indeed, a most piteous sight; a group of squalid wretches, distended upon a heap of rocks and stones, which appeared against all reason and probability to have been made the refuge of beings bearing the shape of humanity. When his wonder had a little subsided, he perceived a narrow, half-ruined outlet, which apparently served the wretched outcasts both for door and window. Upon reaching the place, he discovered, by the dying light of a lamp, a man nearly naked, stretched upon a little straw, while four young boys in a still more tattered condition stood around, weeping and wringing their hands as if their little hearts would break. Sometimes they would throw their arms about him and kiss him; when, on hearing the noise made by Rodrigo on his entrance, the man slightly raised his head, but without the least expression of alarm; for what had he more to dread? The children, likewise, turned eagerly towards him, as if above all fear; for they, too, had been too well tutored in the bitter school of penury, squalidness, and tears. Deeply touched at such a scene, Rodrigo hastened to the man's side, attempting to console and reassure him, at the same time promising to return speedily with succour. "There is no help for me," replied the poor man, "now famine has done its work; but I would fain recommend these poor innocents to thy notice, for whose sake alone I have wished to prolong this wretched life. Their tears long inspired me with courage to bear up, and the sweet features of that boy, so like those of his mother, who is happily spared the anguish of such a sight, were alone sufficient to inspire me with new strength, while strength availed anything for our support. Were I assured these unhappy pledges of our love would not speedily follow us to the tomb, the victims of the same fate, I should at least die in peace!" and here, overpowered with the depth of his affliction, the wretched man ceased. Rodrigo could not refrain from tears "Alas!" he exclaimed, "what a sight is here! Well, indeed, may these tears bathe my cheeks, yet they are sweeter far than the false smiles I wore in scenes of festivity and splendour. Take heart, poor man!" he continued; "you will not die; and weep no more, my good children; bear up a little longer and I will return!" Then with the speed of love, no longer irresolute and slow, Rodrigo hastens back to his villa; a new soul seems to inspire him; he is no more like the same being; beneficence guides his steps: and upon again reaching home, where his domestics were full of anxiety at his absence, and preparing to issue forth in search of him, he is scarcely recognised by the rapidity and animation of his manner. Yet they were rejoiced to behold him safe, for he was not

a tyrannical master, and were on the point of expressing their satisfaction, when he interrupted them with orders to prepare his carriage, and to select food and clothing, while he himself directed them, assisting with his own hands. Two large chests of clothes and provisions being thus prepared, a quantity of wine and medicine was added, and the whole despatched by several porters, with directions to the spot. The moment his carriage appeared, he gave orders whither to be driven, and taking his seat by torchlight, for it was then past midnight, he motioned one of his favourite attendants to accompany him. "Does the driver," inquired his master, "understand me?" "Yes," said the other, "and I know the place perfectly well. There is a family of poor people starving in a dwelling among the rocks. They are not unknown to me, and I have occasionally afforded them my mite!" "You have!" exclaimed his master in a tone of surprise; "you assisted them, while I never afforded them anything. O Benedict! you have made me blush for my name, my station, and my wealth. You have anticipated your master in doing good; but you shall assist me to repair my past negligence and errors we will go together, we will make the drooping hearts of thousands sing for joy! Be quick! let us commence the soul-inspiring and delightful task. Life is yet worth something; I feel as if I might yet be happy. when shall we be there?" Soon approaching the refuge of despair, Rodrigo alighted, and accompanied by his faithful servant, began his work of charity and love. To feed the hungry and clothe the naked was his first care: the poor children crowded round him, and with a strength of filial attachment that surprised him, they all four hastened, before tasting a morsel, with a portion of what was given them to their father. Rodrigo's eyes overflowed at the sight; but they were not tears of unmingled bitterness. A new species of happiness dilated his breast; he had just snatched five of his fellow-creatures from the jaws of famine and an untimely grave. Upon recovering a little strength, their eyes were all directed towards him, their hands met his, their voices became louder and louder in his praise. It was then Rodrigo felt an emotion of happiness he had never before experienced as he sought to repress the vehemence of their gratitude. He raised the aged father, who had thrown himself at his feet, and, embracing the children, retreated from the spot, after leaving further directions with his faithful domestic.

On inquiring into the cause of their sufferings, he found that they were wholly unmerited, the unfortunate family having been made victims to the cupidity and cunning of an unprincipled character, who had ruined them by a lawsuit But their misfortunes were now at an end; it was reserved for the now happy Rodrigo to restore them to their former credit and respectability He invited them to his villa; succeeded in gaining for them a new trial, and in punishing the villain who had oppressed them Nor was this all; for having once experienced the delight of doing good, he never relaxed in his efforts, spreading blessings everywhere around him, and often observing in the fulness of his heart, "At length I have discovered in what true pleasure consists."

Francesco Soave.

FRANCESCO SOAVE.



OF this writer, and a few other Italian novelists belonging to the latter half of the eighteenth century, we meet with no published accounts extant, a circumstance, perhaps, that may be expected to occur in a list of names, so numerous as the present work affords, chiefly celebrated for their lighter compositions in prose fiction. In fact, it will be perceived that most of the novelists we have recorded were men of distinguished talents, possessed of considerable influence in their respective states, and not unfrequently employed in important offices and embassies. Where this, however, has not been the case, we find that the simple character of a writer of fiction, estimable and amusing as it may in itself be, has not always proved sufficient to hand down the author's name and merits to posterity. Hence the occasional occurrence of anonymous productions that we have already noticed, and of a few authors, as in the two succeeding instances, whose stories, excellent as they are in their way, have not elicited any critical remarks and discussions Neither in Fabroni nor Moreri, the most recent of Italy's literary historians, do we find any account of the authors here alluded to, notwithstanding our utmost research.

NOVELLA II.

ALL are desirous of happiness, and all more or less study the means of attaining it. Yet we scarcely meet with any one who will not admit that, in spite of his best directed and most persevering efforts, he has failed in the object of his wishes. How then, we may inquire, does it happen that, amidst so many candidates for the prize, not a single one should prove the victor, and bear away the olive-branch in peace, the envy of his less happy fellow-mortals? Can we all of us mistake the way, pursuing, as we do, such a diversity of routes; or, misled by false guides, do we track the fugitive through paths by which she is inaccessible, and which defy our most ingenious efforts? Such, it is to be feared, is the real fact; and the following tale, however fanciful, will be found to contain some important truths exhibited under the veil of fiction, that may serve to illustrate the object we have in view.

An Arabian shepherd, whose name was Alimek, as he stood one day idly watching his flocks or wandering amidst the green pastures, chanced to espy, under the side of a mountain, a deep grotto, half

hidden in the surrounding trees and bushes; and impelled by curiosity, with some difficulty approached the entrance, which he found very wild and dismal, though a ray of light descending from above broke upon him as he advanced. Pursuing its direction, he discovered in the farther recesses of the cave, carefully deposited on one side, a purse, a ring, and a sheet of old parchment. Seizing the purse with the utmost avidity, the poor shepherd had the misfortune to find it empty, and exclaimed in a tone of vexation, "Now a plague upon thee! I thought thou hadst been something better than a mere outside. Thou canst not even boast a single piece, be it more or less, so even lie and rot where I found thee!" and he flung it indignantly upon the ground

As it fell upon the rock, a sound was heard that bore a great resemblance to the chinking of gold, and Alimek as hastily snatched it up again as he had parted with it before. What was his astonishment to find it full! "Heavens!" he cried, "what is this? By our prophet, there is some enchantment here, and I will take care to turn it to good account!" Then, having secured the gold, he next took the ring and parchment, and hastened as fast as possible out of the grot. "Farewell, O ye ancient woods!" he cried; "no more shall you behold me sporting in your pleasant shades. The favourite of Fortune, I must now forsake you for the busy city, for the splendour and delights of Mecca" The next moment he found himself transported thither, and, gazing around in the greatest confusion and surprise, he had recourse to the parchment, where the following directions met his eye: "The purse will fill again with gold as often as you please, and the ring will not fail to transport you whithersoever you think proper." Delighted at these tidings, Alimek's first wish was to visit different countries, and this he speedily sought to indulge. Owing to the facility of his conveyance, he was enabled to traverse a variety of regions in a short space of time, and at first he felt much interested in observing the diversity of climates, inhabitants, and natural productions, comparing customs and manners, as well as the people, with each other. Soon, however, he began to grow weary of this, and he found upon a nearer view that the apparent varieties, with which he had been in the outset so much pleased, began to vanish on a nearer inspection; that art and nature are far more uniform in the objects they present to our view than he had supposed; and that all the usages and customs of mankind trace their origin to the same human passions, and are merely characterised by the most trivial differences. The desire of novelty at length ceased altogether, his curiosity being satiated, and he found travelling so very irksome that he became glad to enjoy a little repose, as affording far superior gratification.

With this view, he selected the city of Constantinople for the scene of his future repose and pleasure, being enabled by his unfailing wealth to gratify his tastes to what extent he pleased; while the concourse of such a variety of nations would supply him, at the same time, with all the novelty he had coveted in his different travels. Here he adopted a regular system of epicurism, indulging himself in every species of pleasure and caprice that he thought at all likely to conduce to his happiness. Much sooner than he expected, however, he

became weary of revelling and rioting in the luxuries of the East: not only the edge of every pleasure was blunted, but his very appetites palled and failed, in spite of the most ingenious artifices to renew their zest. Reduced to this condition, he was seized with such intolerable ennui as to feel life a burden to him wherever he went. A violent fever, the effect of his excesses, was alone sufficient to rouse him from this torpid state, convincing him how little a soft and voluptuous life is calculated to bestow happiness; and he vowed, in future, to devote himself earnestly to business and incessant occupations of some kind. His prodigious wealth quickly procured him friends and patrons in abundance, while his superior knowledge and accomplishments, acquired during his travels, enabled him to discharge some of the highest offices with great credit and success. In this career he gradually continued to rise until he at length attained the rank of Grand Vizier, when he found his avocations so numerous, besieged as he was by petitions on all sides, and charged with the orders of the Sultan, that he hardly possessed a moment for repose. What with the caprices of an effeminate monarch, the intrigues among the ladies of his seraglio, the conspiracies and cabals of rebels and rivals, he not only found sufficient business to keep him alive, but was kept in a continued state of fear and agitation. Nor was it long before he felt to his cost that such state, dignity, and honours are only a more illustrious species of slavery, and all his thoughts became bent upon a decent and safe retreat from office. But just as he was on the point of soliciting his discharge, tidings of a warlike nature came from Persia, which compelled him to issue instant orders for the reinforcement of the Sultan's armies, for the purpose of chastising the growing pride and insolence of his enemies. It was now that he felt a thirst of glory first animate his bosom, and he prepared with alacrity for the combat.

In the opening of the campaign two brilliant victories rewarded his efforts; the enemy was discomfited on all sides, and driven once more beyond the limits of Turkestan The name of Alimek resounded throughout the empire; he was crowned with honours and applauses by the great, while the Grand Signior was preparing to receive him in his capital with the most sumptuous display of pomp and power, the better to grace his triumph. But the Vizier, too much elated with his successes, had the imprudence to advance incautiously into the enemy's territories, and unluckily fell into an ambush, from which it became impossible to rescue his army without very considerable loss. From that moment the magic of his name was gone, the scene was changed, and his praises were turned into threats and execrations, while instead of his promised triumphs, he found himself saluted by certain death in the form of the bowstring.

It was now that he experienced the benefit of his ring as well as of his purse, by virtue of which he disappeared, and after traversing various regions of India, still accompanied by anxiety and ennui, he finally took up his residence in the city of Golconda. Here there chanced to reign a princess of such surpassing beauty, that she was regarded as the wonder of all Asia. Alimek became deeply enamoured

of her at first sight, and eagerly sought an introduction to the court, which he as easily obtained. The magnificence in which he there appeared arrayed, his highly polished and agreeable manners, together with the elegance and wit of his conversation, failed not to attract the regard of the Princess Selima, who soon began to take singular pleasure in his society, inviting him to all her parties, and requesting him to take up his residence some time at Golconda. Here he engaged with equal ardour in the feast, the chase, and the joust, giving the most sumptuous entertainments, and surpassing the proudest and most ambitious in his pomp of dress, his jewels, and the richness of his train Thus by degrees he insinuated himself into the confidence of the fair Selima, who soon conceiving a violent passion for him, held out hopes of conferring upon him her hand. At length Alimek imagined he had reached the summit of happiness, of which he had so long been in search, when the other courtiers, whose jealousy took the alarm at the superior influence of a mere stranger, so effectually combined against him, that, by aid of the blackest calumnies, they not only effected his disgrace with the princess, but obtained a warrant for his execution, which would doubtless have taken place, had he not made a speedy appeal to the mercy of his king.

Again Alimek took his departure with feelings of regret and indignation, proportioned to the insult and disappointment he had suffered Happiness had thus vanished when in his very grasp, and he now felt himself alone, a wanderer on the earth, comfortless and discontented with everything, and careless whither he directed his steps. In this mood, he approached the confines of China; and as he was traversing, immersed in thought, the dreary solitudes before him, he suddenly heard not far from him sounds of festive mirth and triumph. Curious to learn whence the voice of revelry and song proceeded, he succeeded in tracing the sound until he arrived at a rural hamlet, where he found a group of villagers celebrating the customary games and sports of the season, all vieing with each other in the ardour of their joyous spirit. So pure and heartfelt, indeed, did it appear, even when depicted upon the face of age, as to induce our hero to approach a venerable figure, whose aspect retained a degree of life and spirit that apparently bade defiance to the weight of years. The old man gazed upon the merry scene before him with sympathetic pleasure, and he received the inquiries of the stranger with an air of intelligence and courtesy that won his regard. "This is by no means an unusual sight with us," he replied; "this day is one of our holidays, consecrated to the worship of our gods and to innocent pastimes and repose. It makes the hours at least pass pleasantly, and that is not a small thing gained." "True," said Alimek, "it must be a delightful reward of your late toils, and the wretched lot you are in general condemned to suffer, earning your scanty fare" The old man smiled: "I have passed my sixtieth year," he continued, "in the state of life you allude to, and I have only to offer up my prayers to the gods for having spent it so pleasantly. I was never unhappy; though I am well aware that you great ones of the world imagine that true felicity can by no means exist unaccompanied with store of gold and silver, diamonds, and other precious

gems, which are quite unnecessary, and never enter into the calculation of us villagers, who are rather inclined, whenever we behold the distressing sights, the tumult and disquietude of your cities, to indulge sentiments of compassion, not of envy and admiration. You are strangers to peace; avarice, ambition, or strife effectually banish repose; and where content dwells not happiness can have no place. Yet are not we simple villagers as rich as the proudest citizens in the world? All that they attempt to enjoy by means of their precious metals becomes ours without the toil and inconvenience attending such a transfer Our flocks and herds, together with the fruits of the earth, supply us with everything needful, and we can want no more while we are content." Surprised at the old man's language, and desirous of ascertaining in what manner he contrived amidst so many labours and privations, to be far happier than he had ever felt himself in all the variety of pomp and splendour, of luxury and of power, which he had so long enjoyed, Alimek adopted the resolution of sojourning for some time near him, and of solacing his sorrows with the contemplation of the harmless sports and pastimes of the children of the hamlet. "It appears extremely singular," he said, addressing the old man, "that compelled, as you appear to be, to suffer continual toils and hardships, you should yet feel any degree of satisfaction, and even be enabled to converse of happiness." "Labour," replied the aged man, "may indeed appear a dreadful punishment to a man sunk in abject sloth and effeminacy; but to us, who are habituated to it, it is rather a pleasure, affording variety and relief. And never did I spend so many weary and irksome hours, as when, disabled by indisposition, I was no longer equal to the discharge of my former duties and avocations; to do nothing was to me a real grievance, an intolerable evil. Moments then appeared as if converted into years, and that period was the most unhappy, I think, of all my days. But as soon as I resumed my former occupations, the evening always surprised me ere I was aware; the tedium and anxiety I had felt vanished I knew not how; though I am at no loss to recognise them again, whenever I visit the crowded streets of your great cities, depicted on the features of the idle and the vain, the avaricious, the dissipated, and the bad." "Yet the perpetual recurrence of fatigue," interrupted Alimek, "which you endure, must be more intolerable, I think, than the life you here describe." "As to fatigue," returned the old man, "it is certainly a great hardship upon a slave who is compelled to exert himself beyond his powers, but not upon free agents like ourselves, who can take our needful refreshment and repose; thus being enabled to resume our labours with fresh vigour and alacrity. Nor did I ever desire my fellow-labourers and assistants to perform heavier tasks than they were equal to, or than I was willing to undertake myself. Upon such conditions labour ceases to be an evil; it is, on the contrary, a wholesome and pleasant exercise, calculated to promote cheerfulness and banish idle and uneasy thoughts. By the same means the body, becoming more firm and vigorous, is better enabled to resist disease, to which indolent and dissipated people are so frequently liable. Then how sweet is the taste of food, how sound the repose that follows a due

exercise of the corporeal powers! besides the noble consciousness of independence, supporting ourselves and families, and deriving these advantages from the labour of our own hands—a species of pleasure of which the great ones of the earth can form no adequate idea. Every fresh furrow drawn in my field seems to me another promise of the joyous harvest season, and it is a pleasure to observe the result of our labours gradually arriving at full maturity." "Yet the fruit of your exertions, after all," said Ahmek, "is but a little matter, more especially when compared with all that the wealthy are enabled to enjoy without any anxiety or trouble." "However little," returned the old man, "it matters not, provided it be sufficient; and when I slake my thirst at this transparent stream, why should it concern me that any other may have it in his power, if he please, of quaffing up the whole of the great river Hoang? Or let him possess the same measure of land: my field and my flock are enough to furnish me with everything needful to my support, my raiment, and my repose. Now, happiness does not consist in much beyond these, beyond the tranquil enjoyment of the fruits of our own industry, satisfied with what Fortune is pleased in addition to bestow. In truth, such as lie buried in sloth, sunk in luxury and effeminacy, are far more poor, and more to be pitied than we are, inasmuch as their desires, still craving for more, can never be gratified, while Nature herself is careful to draw the limits of our wants, which she as easily and kindly satisfies. With you it is different, caprice being the only law which the fashionable, the wealthy, and the worldly-minded choose to obey; and hence arise a thousand absurd wishes and wants, which, as they cannot all be gratified, become the fruitful source of disquietude and woe. If you will deign, then, to afford credit to the experience of age, and I have enjoyed ample opportunities of judging, no less amidst the busy haunts of cities than the silent and solitary scenes of Nature, you will agree that three things only are requisite to happiness, though these are indispensable—namely, tranquillity, occupation, and content. Take heed to preserve your mind in peace by keeping enmity and discord at a distance, by restraining the more unruly passions, and by supporting with firmness the unavoidable evils of life, while you may effectually banish ennui by constant and regular employment: make use of the blessings bestowed by Heaven with wisdom and moderation: finally, try to be content, and you will not be unhappy."

Astonished at finding so much true philosophy and good sense in an old villager, Ahmek was deeply affected by his reasoning, as well as with all that he saw and heard. On taking his leave, he continued to ponder over the past, and the more he considered the more true did the words of the old man appear. "So the felicity I have so long been in search of," he exclaimed in a tone of chagrin, "was from the first within my grasp, while I have been wandering throughout the world in pursuit of it in vain. The familiar friend and companion of these villagers, it seems to have flown from my embraces the more earnestly I sought its aid. Of what service, then, has been the secret, the unhappy secret that I first discovered in the grot, and which I believed was fraught with blessings? Wearied and disgusted with all

I have seen during my long and frequent travels, the strife, envy, and depravity of mankind, varied only as folly and extravagance dictate, palled with repeated pleasures that never gave me any real satisfaction, and brought me to the brink of the grave, and tormented by vain ambition, anxiety, and intrigue, my best exertions rewarded only with a prospect of the bowstring; even betrayed by the woman I most loved on earth, who gave orders for my execution at the moment that she flattered me with the promise of her hand; why did I fear the loss of life, and why do I still bear the odious and insupportable burden of existence? Far better to have remained in my native fields, the child of nature and simplicity There my food, though not artificial, was wholesome and refreshing; my raiment, though simple, was warm, and suited to the seasons much better than the vain and capricious fashions I have since adopted." Revolving these thoughts during the whole of the ensuing night, he rose at the break of day, with the intention of requesting the old man's permission to reside with him, in order to acquire some share of that independence and happiness he so much coveted The old man smiled. "I rejoice," he said, "that our simple and peaceful way of life, so different from all you have before experienced, can possess any charms for you, though I fear you will hardly fancy it, particularly if you suppose happiness to be confined to any one place, even to the quiet retreats of the country. Without content of mind it will in vain be sought for anywhere, and with it happiness may be enjoyed in the crowded haunts of cities as well as in the wild. Moderation and government of the passions will ensure it everywhere." "But, my old friend," replied Alimek, "a country life is by no means so new to me as you seem to imagine; I daresay I should resume it with much pleasure." And here he acquainted the aged villager with his origin, his miraculous discovery in the grotto, and all his subsequent adventures. Then presenting him with the magic purse and ring, of which he had become heartily weary, he entreated, as the only return, that he would consent to give him refuge from the stormy passions, the intrigues, and the vanities of the world "Very gladly," replied the other; "and I will accept what you offer me, though I shall take care not to avail myself of their powers just Heavens forbid! I will retain them in case you should repent the conditions you have just made, for, however wise, I think they are a little precipitate. In this way you will be enabled to resume your miraculous gift when you think proper, should you find our mode of life too little suitable to your feelings, and too great a contrast to your former adventures and exploits" "Fear me not," replied Alimek. "I have only to express my gratitude for your kind advice and your kinder reception of me. The days of my vanity are over; I have experienced the folly of riches, ambition, glory, and of all the boasted happiness that the world can afford" Strange as such a resolution may appear, Alimek firmly adhered to it; his perseverance produced content, and, finding himself growing happier every day, he imagined he could pursue no better plan than to unite himself still more nearly and intimately with the old man's family. With this view he cast his eyes upon one of his daughters, a beautiful woman, whose modesty and domestic

virtues were still superior to her beauty, and whose conduct formed a pleasing contrast to that of the princess who so vilely betrayed our hero when on the eve of marriage. Having now possessed himself of that happiness which neither riches, nor pleasures, nor honours had it in their power to bestow, Alimek finally determined to bury the purse and the ring where they should never again be discovered, being well convinced that they only instigated their possessor to render himself miserable, by seeking for real bliss where it can least be found.

NOVELLA III.

It was during the late severe season, a winter remarkable for its long and inclement frost, experienced with equal rigour throughout Italy, France, and Germany, where the largest rivers were rapidly congealed, and people were seen to fall dead with cold, that in the French town of Metz a poor sentinel was sent upon guard on one of the bitterest nights, when a fierce north wind added to the usual cold. His watch was in the most exposed situation of the place, and he had scarcely recovered from a severe indisposition; but he was a soldier, and declared his readiness to take his round. It chanced that he had pledged his affections to a young woman of the same city, who no sooner heard of his being on duty, than she began to lament bitterly, declaring it to be impossible for him to survive the insufferable severity of such a night after the illness under which he still lingered. Tormented with anxiety, she was unable to close her eyes or even to retire to rest; and as the night advanced, the cold becoming more intense, her fancy depicted him struggling against the fearful elements and his own weakness, and at length, no longer able to support himself, overpowered with slumber, and sinking to eternal rest upon the ground. Maddened at the idea and heedless of consequences, she hastily clothed herself as warmly as she could, ran out of the house, situated not far from the place of watch, and with the utmost courage arrived alone at the spot. And there she indeed found her poor soldier nearly as exhausted as she had imagined, being with difficulty able to keep his feet, owing to the intenseness of the frost. She earnestly conjured him to hasten, though only for a little while, to revive himself at her house, when, having taken some refreshment, he might return; but aware of the consequences of such a step, this he kindly though resolutely refused to do. "But only for a few minutes," she continued, "while you melt the horrid frost which has almost congealed you alive." "Not an instant," returned the soldier; "it were certain death even to stir from the spot." "Surely not," cried the affectionate girl; "it will never be known; and if you stay, your death will be still more certain: you have at least a chance, and it is your duty, if possible, to preserve your life. Besides, should your absence happen to be discovered, Heaven will take pity upon us, and provide in some way for your preservation." "Yes," said the soldier, "but that is not the question; for suppose I can do it

with impunity, is it noble or honourable thus vilely to abandon my post without any one upon guard?" "But there will be some one; if you consent to go I will remain here until you return. I am not in the least afraid; so, be quick, and give me your arms." This request she enforced with so much eloquence and tenderness, and so many tears, that the poor soldier, against his better judgment, was fain to yield, more especially as he felt himself becoming fainter and fainter, and unable much longer to resist the cold. Intending to return within a few minutes, he left the kind-hearted girl in his place, wrapping her in his cloak, and giving her his arms and cap, together with the watchword; and such was her delight at the idea of having saved the life of her beloved, that she was for a time insensible to the intense severity of the weather. But just as she was flattering herself with the hope of his return, an officer made his appearance, who, as she forgot in her confusion to give the sign, suspected that the soldier had either fallen asleep or fled. What was his surprise, on rushing to the spot, to find a young girl overpowered with alarm, and unable to give any account of herself from her extreme agitation and tears.

Being instantly conducted to the guard-house, and restored to some degree of confidence, the poor girl confessed the whole truth; soliciting, with the anguish of doubt and distraction, a pardon for her betrothed husband. He was instantly summoned from her house, but was found in such a state of weakness from the sufferings he had undergone as to leave little prospect of his surviving them. It was with much difficulty, with the assistance of medical advice, that he was restored sufficiently to give an intelligible account of himself, after which he was placed in close custody to await the period of his trial.

"Far happier had it been for me," he exclaimed, on being restored to consciousness, "far happier to have died at my post than to be thus reserved for a cruel and ignominious death!" And the day of his trial coming on, such was the politic severity of martial law, as he had well foreseen, that he was condemned to be executed within a few days after his sentence. Great as was his affliction on hearing these tidings, it was little in comparison with the remorse and terror that distracted the breast of his beloved girl, who, in addition to the grief of losing him in so public and ignominious a manner, accused herself as the cause of the whole calamity. He to whom she had been so long and tenderly attached was now to fall, as it were, by the hand of his betrothed bride! Such was the strangeness and suddenness of the event, that, her feelings being wrought up to the highest pitch of excitation and terror, her very despair seemed to give her strength; and, casting all fear of consequences aside, she made a vow to save him or to perish in the attempt. Bitterly weeping, and with dishevelled hair, she ran wildly through the city, beseeching pity and compassion from all her friends and acquaintance, and soliciting everybody of rank and influence to unite in petitioning for a pardon for her lover, or that her life, she being the sole author of the fault, might be accepted in the place of his

The circumstances being made known, such was the tenderness and compassion excited in her behalf, and such the admiration of her con-

duct, at once so affectionate and spirited, that persons of the highest rank became interested for her, and used the most laudable efforts to obtain a free pardon for the poor soldier. The ladies of the place also exerting their influence, the governor, no longer proof against this torrent of public feeling, made a merit of granting him forgiveness on the condition of his being immediately united to the heroic and noble-hearted girl, and accepting with her a small donation, an example which was speedily followed by people of every rank, so that the young bride had the additional pleasure of presenting her beloved with a handsome dower, which satisfied their moderate wishes and crowned their humble happiness.

Gianfrancesco Altanesi.

GIANFRANCESCO ALTANESI.

NOVELLA I.

If it be truly observed that the relative position in which mankind are placed, requiring the mutual assistance of each other, is the real origin of every contract, the same obligation may perhaps be equally admitted with regard to friendship, which may be considered in the light of a contract between two persons mutually to love and esteem one another To participate, moreover, in each other's pleasures and misfortunes is another part of such a covenant, less easy of fulfilment; for though it may be comparatively easy to partake of one another's prosperity, it would be a difficult task to find one who is apt to feel as much for his friend's calamities as for his own. Hence, if we have reason to complain of the want of good faith as exemplified in the breach of nearly all kinds of contracts between man and man, how much more justly might that of friendship be charged with the number of its perjuries, insomuch that a true friend may well be esteemed, as he unfortunately is, either a sort of nonentity, or so very rare an acquisition as not to be found when most needed in the hours of misfortune and grief. Nevertheless, the character is known to exist; and happy should I conceive myself were I able to impress upon the minds of my readers the excellence and importance of one of the noblest virtues that can inspire the human breast And happier they could they avail themselves of the example I am about to afford them, and become such to each other as the two characters here represented, in every way deserving of their admiration and regard

At the age of sixteen, Valerio, the native of one of Italy's most distinguished republics, was left an orphan, the heir of very considerable wealth, well educated, and of a cultivated mind and susceptible feelings. His father's death, happening just at this period, was a severe blow to him, inexperienced as he yet was in the manners and practices of the world. Reflecting upon this, and in grief for his recent loss, he determined to retire for some time into the country until the completion of his education, being desirous of attaining to greater age and experience before he mixed in the conversation and manners of the world With this intention he fixed upon a pleasant little villa, very delightfully situated on the skirts of his own estate, where he contrived, by dint of study, by arranging his

affairs, and by a limited intercourse with surrounding families, to pass away his time, leading the sort of life most congenial to his wishes. Happening one day, in the course of his walks, to be engaged in perusing the works of Tully, he turned to his treatise *De Amicitiâ*, and began to study it with attention. As he became more deeply interested, he frequently interrupted his reading with expressions of admiration, and wishes for the possession of such a friend as he found there described, one who might in some degree supply the loss of his kind and beloved father. Thus meditating, he extended his walk until he reached a beautiful grove, which cast a soft and solemn shade from its tall overspreading boughs, still admitting, in its opening glades, enough of the sun's rays to produce an agreeable warmth below. The green earth was enamelled with flowers, while grateful breezes, wafting through the branches, served to cool the air, and, by gentle undulations of the leaves, produced a thousand variations of light upon the surface of the ground. The most beautiful birds were seen flying from branch to branch, and a sweet chorus rose from among the leaves of innumerable hidden songsters; while a limpid streamlet pursued its course, adding its murmurs as it fell at a distance among the rocks, and in its way refreshing banks of flowers, where it rose in places interrupted in its pebbly bed. Near it appeared a circle of beautiful shrubs in full flower and leaf, surrounding a little vacant space, just sufficient to admit one person in a recumbent posture. Charmed with the delicious spot, Valerio penetrated into its cool recess, and, throwing himself idly at his length, he fixed his eyes upon the beautiful skies, listening to the voice of rural harmony that rose around him.

He had not long indulged his reverie, when, hearing a rustling sound near him among the trees, he turned his head, and beheld a youth of noble aspect, but apparently overwhelmed with sorrow, walking with a slow pace, and frequently stopping as if checked by some painful recollection, until he finally seated himself upon the margin of the stream, and rested his head mournfully on his hand. There he long sat, careless of every object around him, and often sighing bitterly, as he exclaimed in a sorrowful tone, "And what will now become of you, hapless Ireno, your dear father torn from your embraces by a violent death? What will become of our family, a sick mother and a young orphan sister committed wholly to my charge? Young and inexperienced as I am, my time spent in youthful studies and amusements, under the eye of an indulgent father, I might have risen to occupy a respectable and honourable place in society; but now, alas! my prospects are for ever destroyed. Who is there to advise me in danger or to console me in adversity, to place a rein upon my passions and to teach me how to conduct myself in prosperity?" As he ceased, Valerio felt himself deeply affected, no less by the expression of Ireno's unfeigned sorrow than by the similarity of circumstances that had led them to seek the same solitudes for relief. Feeling something stronger than mere sympathy, he could not restrain his desire of making himself known to the orphan sufferer, and, starting from his seat, he saluted Ireno with an expression of kindness and courtesy, and then proceeded in the gentlest terms to reason with and console him. Recounting at the

same time his own loss, he intimated how rejoiced he should be in any manner to supply the place of a parent, if he might so soon venture to offer the hand of friendship to one whom he had already learned to esteem. Nor did he omit to recommend his proposal by some of the most beautiful arguments of the Roman orator whose treatise he held in his hands Ireno, expressing his grateful sense of his kindness, testified his acceptance of it by continuing the conversation in the same tone, and added an account of his family, of some wealth and consideration in a neighbouring village belonging to the next principality, whither he invited Valerio to accompany him; to which the other, desirous of being introduced to his mother and sister, willingly consented Their regard for each other, thus auspiciously commenced, was soon riveted by a variety of circumstances, by similarity of taste and pursuits, and by sympathising in their common joys and sufferings. In a short time there was nothing that they did not confide to each other; they seemed to participate in one another's most intimate thoughts and feelings, while they did not scruple to reprove their mutual faults. They also vied with each other in acts of piety and benevolence, as well as in all noble accomplishments, so as to afford a model of excellence to their countrymen, whose society they adorned.

One day as Ireno was returning from a visit to his friend, just as he approached the city walls he chanced to fall in with a certain lord of high rank, accompanied by his son, going to the chase. Although he turned aside his horse to give them convenient passage, and respectfully saluted them, the proud patrician, instead of returning his politeness, had the rudeness to call out to him to make more way, taunting him at the same time with his want of spirit and his romantic friendship for the young Valerio. Ireno with modest firmness replied to this strange charge, smiling a little at the cause of the great man's irritation, which had the effect of further provoking him; for, not content with reviling Ireno, he began to attack the character of Valerio Further incensed that Ireno presumed to answer him in so easy and unconcerned a style, he attempted to astound him with the number of his titles, the only merit, indeed, that he could boast; but finding these as ineffectual as his threats, he gave vent to his passion, and attempted to strike the object of his unjust resentment Ireno, parrying the blow, suddenly gave his horse the spur, which had the effect of making him plunge in such a way as to alarm the brave patrician by his furious kicks, then giving him the rein, he set off at full speed: upon which the nobleman, taking it for the effect of terror, drew his sword and rode after him in a very bold and heroic style. For some time Ireno succeeded in avoiding his pursuer, until, finding his road intercepted by the river, he was compelled to make head in his own defence. All his efforts to mollify the angry lord proving vain, he in his turn drew his sword, which pierced his enemy, unluckily rushing forward in the heat of his fury, to the heart. He fell dead upon the spot; and there being no other witness to the deed besides his son, Ireno threw down his sword and was departing. But the youth, who had only been deterred from attacking him by the dread of his superior prowess, then rode boldly after him, raising the whole

country round by his cries, until the unhappy Ireno found himself surrounded by crowds who instantly laid hands upon him, and detained him while they sent for the city officers, who speedily appeared. He was surrendered into the hands of justice, and thrown into one of the gloomiest prisons, while tidings of the extraordinary murder just committed soon reached the ears of his friend Valerio, whose horror and surprise it is impossible to describe. He set off, without losing a moment, for the public prison; and with some difficulty obtaining an interview, he had the delight of finding his friend perfectly tranquil and resigned, and received from his own lips a clear statement of the affair just as it occurred. Not an instant did he delay in discovering the real circumstances to persons of the greatest weight and respectability in the city. But the superior rank of the deceased and the influence of his family, together with the want of witnesses in Ireno's favour, were too powerful to be withstood; he was tried and condemned to suffer death.

Reduced to this extremity, Ireno's mind seemed less disturbed at his approaching fate than at the grief and tears of his friend, his mother, and his orphan sister. These, with all his private affairs, he recommended to the care of Valerio, who promised to supply the loss of a son and a brother. The prisoner then declared that he should die happy if permitted once more to revisit his native place, to embrace his mother and sister, and, after arranging a few private matters, to return within four days. The adverse party, however, ridiculed the proposal, declaring it a mere subterfuge to facilitate his escape; when Valerio, indignant at such an aspersion, came forward to give his own life in pledge for his friend's honour, saying that he would willingly suffer on the fourth day in case Ireno did not return.

His offer was at length accepted, and the noon of the fourth day was appointed for the term of his imprisonment, the adverse party hoping to cast double disgrace upon Ireno's name, in the belief that he would not be able within that period to return. Accordingly he set out to see his relatives, and having taken final leave of them and settled his affairs, on the morning of the fourth day he hastened back as fast as possible. But the treacherous relatives of the deceased lord, in contemplation of this event, despatched a troop of hired menials with orders to arrest him on the road. Falling in with him accordingly, they commanded him to turn back, which he refused to do, and a fierce struggle took place, in which the brave youth succeeded in opening himself a path through the midst of them. Proceeding wounded and breathless, he with much difficulty reached the city, but not until after the period fixed for the execution had elapsed. Here he had the grief of beholding his best friend already placed upon the scaffold, and the executioner preparing to fulfil his office. "Make way, here is the criminal!" was the cry caught from the lips of Ireno, and echoed by a thousand tongues. The crowd opened, and the next moment he sank down upon the scaffold, exclaiming, "I die happy; I have saved his life!" It then became a contest which should suffer for the other, each appealing to the judges, who experienced no slight difficulty in adjusting their claims. Under all

circumstances, they declared it was left wholly to their own choice; when the noble contest became so painful, that the son of the deceased, no longer proof against the sight, confessed the real fact, and did full justice to Ireno's conduct in the affair. The two friends then hand in hand descended from the scaffold, amid the rapturous plaudits of the surrounding multitude.

NOVELLA II.

A RICH and noble cavalier, inhabiting one of the chief cities of Italy, having recently lost his wife, who had presented him with an only son, now of mature age, again espoused, at no distant period, a lady of high birth, a quality, however, that constituted the whole of her wedding portion. She was fully sensible of the importance attached to such a circumstance; her favourite theme being the succession of the illustrious and little less than royal blood of her progenitors. To such an extreme did she indulge her notions on this subject, as to surpass all the usual instances of vanity peculiar to the sex; and the Countess Eleonora soon became as notorious as she wished, for her proud and punctilious, fastidious yet fierce, in one word, her intolerable temper. This was wofully manifested in the case of her new stepson and daughter, Valerio, the son of her husband, having recently married with his father's consent, since which period he formed part of his family. But he had soon reason to repent taking up his residence with his father, the reign of discord commencing soon after his stepmother made her appearance Feeling it to be quite impossible to tolerate much longer the lady's asperity, more especially as his father had the weakness to abet all her errors and submit himself entirely to her supreme will and pleasure, he was in the habit of getting out of her way, and spending as much of his time as possible from home, leaving the stage clear to his stepmother's tyranny and intrigues, who thought herself entitled to despise every one inferior in point of birth to herself. During his absence from his father's house, Valerio was unlucky enough to become acquainted with a few characters of a more gay description than the society he had been used to frequent, and was induced by degrees to indulge in somewhat more fashionable amusements. Nor was it long before his new amusements became vices; and among these he soon imbibed a violent passion for play, to which he did not scruple to sacrifice the greatest portion of his time and money, besides neglecting the peace and happiness of a young and lovely wife, who, living under the harsh sway of a stepmother, had little to rely upon besides the affection of her consort, and often wept bitterly as she found that he daily absented himself for longer periods, and passed the chief part of the night from her side. Her father-in-law afforded her neither relief nor protection, his doting weakness rendering him a still greater slave to the woman whom he feared even more than he loved. In this deplorable situation, every day becoming more serious, did this late

price of which he stood, it became impossible for him longer to conceal the serious anxiety which he felt on his son's account, and the grief under which he laboured.

The young Marquis listened attentively to the complaints of his old friend, conscious of the purity of his motives, nor was it without much reluctance that he entered upon a defence of his own conduct, being almost as unwilling to confess his noble and disinterested efforts on that son's behalf as to admit the charges just advanced against him by the unhappy Count. With such modest feelings he attempted to allay the wretched father's anxiety, by suggesting in the first place that no violent passion, like that which his poor son had conceived for the gaming-table, could possibly be destroyed at a single effort, but that, like a wild beast of the woods, it would require much soothing and flattering usage before submitting to the hand of friendship or of power That, moreover, instead of encouraging him in such a career, he had already undertaken the difficult task of eradicating so fatal a propensity, and that it would be quite necessary for his young friend to be left solely to his direction, without the authority of a father appearing in any of the steps he was about to take. Further, he would presume to insist upon his old friend retiring to rest, and leaving him to await the arrival of Valerio, as he was, moreover, expecting one of his messengers, whom he had despatched from Rome to Turin, bearing commissions of the highest importance, with the result of a long-impending lawsuit. The old Count, yielding entire credit to the kind words and looks of the Marquis, that sufficiently bespoke the tender interest he took in his son's welfare, affectionately embraced him, expressed his lasting gratitude for so much kindness, and entreated his forgiveness at the same time for having indulged the least suspicion of his fidelity. Yet it was long after the Count's departure before Valerio made his appearance, with an air of satisfaction and triumph which augured nothing good for the success of his friend's attempt He said he had that evening had a very surprising run of fortune, enough to compensate him for nearly all his late losses—tidings which his friend received with apparent pleasure, observing that he was glad he had not suffered, and that he would himself accompany him the next time he meant to play. This occurred the ensuing night, and, apprehensive of losing his influence over him, the young Marquis accordingly went It was at the house of a foreigner whom the Marquis himself recommended to his young friend, and who was in fact no other than one of his most confidential servants, who had assumed the character at his master's request. He was the same person who had been despatched by him to Turin, and had just returned with tidings of his master's success in his long-contested lawsuit Possessing, in addition to strict integrity, a very pleasing person and manners, he had all the art of a conjuror in a variety of games, especially at cards, with which he often amused his master and his friends. On this occasion, he was arrayed in a rich dress, with all the instruments of his art placed around him, and furnished with an immense sum of money, with orders from his master to win as much more from his friend and himself as he could possibly contrive to do, even until they should cast their

future fortunes on the die. His skilful servant instantly understood his cue, and assuming his character, prepared to execute his orders to the minutest point. About evening the two friends issued forth, and proceeding to the house of the disguised foreigner (who received his master only as a cavalier whom he had casually met), they instantly, after a few ceremonies, sat down to table, where in a short time the two friends were unlucky enough to lose everything they had in the world. Valerio then, in a paroxysm of despair, pledged his word for the future inheritance from his father; all which being gone, both the losers leaped up in the utmost despair and rushed out of the house. The time was now arrived for attempting the long-wished-for reform: the rage of Valerio was dreadful, and he proposed the most fatal expedients, bent upon not surviving his utter ruin. With much difficulty the Marquis prevailed upon him to return home, contriving that he should pass by the chamber of his lovely but unhappy wife, who was then heard indulging the profoundest grief. Valerio was cut to the soul; he raved, he tore his hair, and it was long before he became sufficiently composed to listen to the reasonings of his friend, who easily obtained from him a promise that, if he could possibly succeed in recovering his lost property, he would for ever abandon the fatal pursuit. This was the point at which his friend had long wished to arrive. He had at last triumphed over this hateful propensity, and his next object was to restore Valerio to the arms and to the confidence of his young and hapless wife. This also was effected; and terrible was the repentant gamester's remorse when he beheld the false foreigner approach his house the ensuing morning, imagining that he came to enforce his claims for everything he had in the world. What was his surprise, then, to perceive him, on entering the room, prostrate himself at the feet of the Marquis, disrobe himself of his cavalier's attire, and present him with the whole of the ill-gotten gains he had made the evening before! The scales fell from the eyes of the infatuated Valerio, and from that time forward he was restored to himself, an ornament to society and the pride of his friends. Yet his feelings were not for a moment to be put into competition with the delightful consciousness that swelled the bosom of the noble young Marquis, a gratification exceeding every other that this world can afford. Nor was the example of so much good sense and benevolence, exercised in correcting the extravagance of ill-regulated passions, lost on the Countess Eleonora, who began from that time to check her inordinate pride; and thus, by the intervention of a judicious friend, concord and happiness were re-established in the mansion to which they had so long been strangers.

Count Lorenzo Magalotti.

COUNT LORENZO MAGALOTTI.



THIS Florentine nobleman, born in the earlier part of the seventeenth century, was distinguished for his literary taste and the extent and variety of his acquirements. A man of the world, a poet, and a passionate admirer of the best and earliest poets of Italy, in addition to his claims as a very pleasing novelist, he is rather remarkable for the polished ease and vivacity than for the strength and profundity of his writings From an account of these, as given by the distinguished prelate, Moreni, who still survives to reflect credit upon the classic soil of Tuscany, the antiquities of which he has so ably illustrated, we learn that they are of a very diversified subject and character, being found to comprehend essays upon different branches of natural history, read in the Royal Academy del Cimento, under the especial patronage of Prince Leopold of Tuscany, and published at Florence in the year 1666, besides a eulogy upon the Cardinal Leopold de' Medici, a description of the villa of Lonchio, addressed to the Marquis Strozzi, some terzine stanzas, in the style of Dante, upon the death of Orazio Rucellai, and a Life of the celebrated traveller, Francesco Carletti.

From the specimen of the Count's novels here presented to the English reader, it will easily be perceived that he claims a high rank among the fictitious writers of the seventeenth century, almost wholly opposed in style and character to those of a preceding era. Evident traces of modern manners and sentiments begin to display the changes that had taken place in society, with its increasing cultivation and refinement.

NOVELLA I.

UPON the summit of Rua, one of the loftiest of the Euganean hills, situated amidst the solemn scenes of Nature, and secluded beneath a canopy of embowering trees, stood the solitary abode of the Penitent Eremites. Its commanding site, overlooking verdant hills and pleasant villas, with noble cities rising in the distance, fully compensated by its variety for the desert loneliness of the spot, the quiet approach to which lay through avenues of lofty pine, inspiring a deep and sacred calm, mingled with an awe well adapted to the scene.

No women are permitted to approach the place except on an appointed day in the early part of autumn, when they are shown no

farther than the temple, not into the more secluded sanctuaries of the hermits' abode. A solemn festival then ushers in the period, the most beautiful women, splendidly attired and mounted upon spirited palfreys, vie with each other in dress and loveliness, and, escorted by the flower of the nobility, add grace and liveliness to the scene. Never was it more magnificently celebrated than on a certain occasion, when the lady of one of the rectors of Padua, who had recently lost her eldest son, returning from France in the flower of his age and hopes, attended the ceremony with a noble train of ladies and cavaliers, with whom she ascended the summit of the mount The splendour of the feast, abounding with all the rarities more suitable to the genius that supplied them than to the nature of the establishment, was calculated to surprise, and even to dazzle the eye.

The warmth of the day becoming more and more insupportable, the lady of the feast, accompanied by her train, retired into the shady recess formed by some beautiful beeches surrounding a little eminence, which commanded a lovely and extensive prospect. There the sweet and solitary scene, so favourable to the indulgence of tender and melancholy thoughts, led her to praise a mode of life so wholly divested of all worldly cares, and preferable in her estimation to the aspiring dignity and love of glory so much affected by vulgar minds, and she proceeded to contrast the vanity of such earthly considerations with the milder pleasures and innocent repose of life, such as was there enjoyed. She had hardly concluded, before one of the cavaliers present happened to mention that such a choice had really been made and adhered to by a noble youth of great worldly expectations To him the solitude and deprivation of a hermitage offered more true delight than the noblest alliances and most festive courts in the world. Expressing her high admiration of so disinterested and magnanimous a resolution, and curious to hear the variety and changes of fortune that had led to it, the lady entreated the superior of the convent to introduce her to him. In a short time he made his appearance; the nobility of his aspect was clearly apparent through his homely habit, while the traces of youthful fire and beauty still threw a charm over his fine but pallid features.

The modesty and humility of his demeanour were in unison with the character he had adopted, though not destitute of the courtesy due to a noble lady and her festive train on an occasion like the present The lady, possessing singularly noble and pleasing qualities, paying him the respect due to his rank, and commending his resolution, as arising out of the most excellent motives, besought him to favour them with an account of his adventures. The young hermit attributed the merit wholly to the Divine power, and expressed great repugnance to repeat the history of his transgressions; on which his superior sought to remove his scruples by observing that, whatever had been the errors of his past life, he had fully repaired them by his exemplary sorrow and repentance; and as it would, perhaps, be a great punishment to him, it would tend to his edification to relate his past life, and add to the efficacy of his sufferings. The young man bowed his head to the superior in token of compliance, and with a

composed countenance and a sort of modest assurance thus began:—"It is a due punishment upon my past levities; the pain of revealing them before this honourable and excellent company I meet with patience and resignation. Obedience, however, is my duty, and all diffidence must give way, so that I have to entreat of your honourable company, most illustrious lady, to excuse me for my apparent boldness in intruding my private affairs upon your attention.

"My name was Sigismondo, Conte d'Arco, the only branch belonging to that house for a long series of years that possessed many extensive seigniories on the confines of Italy and Germany. My father died while I was yet a child; and my mother, on her marrying a second time, caused me to be educated at the court of the Archduchess Dowager of Inspruck, my native sovereign, as one of the pages of honour. My tender age and misfortunes awakened so much compassion in the princess, that she seemed to regard me rather as a mother than a mistress, treating me in every particular like her child. She made me a playfellow of the Princess Claudia, an only daughter, about the same age as myself, not exceeding seven: we lived on the most familiar terms, and formed an attachment that became more rooted with our increasing years. It would be idle to attempt to disguise from your penetration, madam, that such youthful tenderness and familiarity was likely soon to ripen into confidence—into love. This passion seemed daily to acquire fresh force, inasmuch as it did not appear disagreeable to the Princess, who was quite sensible of its existence To say the truth, as it will fully appear in the sequel, if you will not think me guilty of too great temerity in raising my eyes to my young queen, I began to imagine, and not without reason, that she deigned to bend hers also upon me. We had each just completed our fifteenth year; my sweet companion was gifted with all the brightest qualities and accomplishments, both of mind and person, the fame of her virtues and her beauty not only spreading throughout Germany, but the rest of Europe Indeed, her portraits have since become familiar in every land, and few are there of those present who would require a more particular description of her charms at my hands. But I have to delineate a few qualities that no pencil can reach, those features of the living mind, bright and beautiful, which at the same moment were enabled to seize their subject, to distinguish and to deliberate in a manner surprising to the most skilful and accomplished intellects.

"Her demeanour was a mixture of sweet grace and gravity, and this soft majesty she always displayed with so little effort as to make it appear perfectly natural. Her pleasures were all innocent and delicate, music forming the chief, in which she was most passionately attached to harmonies of a plaintive and pathetic cast. I have often surprised her singing such songs in some sweet retired scene, and shedding tears over feigned woes, borne away by her natural tenderness, and by an irresistible attachment to subjects of this description.

"In truth, it might be said that her own prophetic genius inspired her with some of those tender lines connected with her own future fortunes, which she sang like the dying bird that is said to usher in her own doom. Deeper passion, along with a sense of duty, now

more and more usurped my breast, my struggles became great; I blamed my own presumption; I tried to recover my self-command, but all in vain. My eyes had too long dwelt upon and become riveted to her charms, and one look of hers overpowered my firmest resolutions, insomuch that I found I must either give way to my feelings and madly throw myself at her feet, or seek to avoid her presence. I no longer frequented her company at those seasons when I was able to dispense with my duties at court; while, the better to give an air of probability to my absence, I devoted myself with double assiduity to my studies and to the amusements common to my age. Fencing, riding, and every kind of military exercise seemed to absorb my whole time, but my thoughts were, in reality, far away. My evenings were spent in music, dancing, and other favourite diversions at the court, while my more serious hours were engaged in the abstruser sciences.

"In this manner weeks passed away without a single interview with my beloved princess; our mutual pursuits of dancing, singing, riding, and reading together were wholly abandoned. Meeting me one day by chance returning from the riding-school, heated and breathless with exercise, she began to rally me upon my sudden and surprising application to more martial pursuits, while, in the same tone, I respectfully assured her that it arose wholly out of a desire to render myself more worthy of her Highness's service, and bowing to her with the same ceremony practised by the other courtiers, I left her without waiting for any reply.

"Whilst I was persevering with the utmost pain in this assumed character, it was resolved by the court to adjourn in order to partake of the pleasures of the country. The place was delightfully situated at a short distance from the city, and the usual duties and occupations of the court giving way to mere amusement, all motive for my prescribed absence and alienation from the young princess ceased. Besides, however much I studied to avoid her, it was not always possible. She surprised me one morning early in a shady walk leading from the garden to the wood. We met—our eyes met—and with a profound obeisance I sought to pass on. Commanding me, however, to follow her, she pursued the path leading to the wood with a composed air and a serene aspect. At length addressing me, she observed, 'Your wisdom and discretion, Count, are above all praise, and merit as much kindness and generosity on my side. It is in vain that you strive to conceal the occasion of your late estrangement, and it would be equally vain for me to affect ignorance of it. Nevertheless I do not wish to give you pain, you shall find your advantage in it, and that you may feel assured of this, even listen and receive the tribute due to your merit.' Blushing deeply as she uttered these words, she saw likewise that I observed it, and continued as follows. 'My confusion, Sigismond, proceeds from my inexperience in such affairs, not from any sense of saying or doing aught unworthy my birth and quality. I know not whether it be permitted a princess to countenance a vassal's love, but I do know that if ever there was one to be pitied in the world, I am that one. Our friendship seemed to have been born with

us; I felt as a child a sort of instinctive attachment to you; our young and playful affection grew with us, and it has continued, as is but too apparent, to be cherished on both sides until it has become a part of ourselves. I am familiar with all your feelings, and understand them better than you understand mine; and in common gratitude it becomes my duty to confess that I feel the same partiality towards you that I am convinced you bear to me. Why then dissimulate with you, or leave you to extort it from me by degrees, when such an admission is mere justice to your virtues, that you may in future feel that noble confidence in them which is calculated to make you happy? Your features are sufficient evidence of your joy. I see it, alas! while I confess with burning blushes how much I love you; though, as we are equal in our passion, I have no cause for shame in the avowal. Were the sceptre I am fated to inherit in my own power, in your hands only should it be deposited, but I am certain that you place a higher value upon my heart than upon my possessions. Fortune may dispose of the latter, of my heart, never—it is yours! Dispose of it as you will. I am sure you will never abuse your power over it, at all events, it is yours!' Ere the lovely princess had half concluded these words, I was at her feet, lost in a delirium of confusion and joy. Not a word could I utter, I kissed the hem of her robes; I felt her tears upon my hands as she gently sought to raise me from the ground. I seized her offered hand, and covered it with my kisses: 'Dearest lady, most honoured and cherished mistress!' I cried, 'is it possible I can believe my senses? Were this the first proof of your regard, well might I imagine you meant to scoff me for the rash feelings I have indulged; but I have experienced ever since a child that your compassion, your generosity, have no bounds. May Heaven's richest blessings attend you! you have snatched me from an abyss of terror and despair at the bare idea of the passion I indulged, and I am now at the summit of all human felicity. Yet would I willingly have aspired higher than the honour of serving you, even at the risk of all I held dear, of life itself, and therefore it was that I attempted to shun you. A sceptre, a thousand sceptres, in competition with your love would have no charms for me. Let kings seize your realms; I am satisfied in possessing the nobility and royalty of such a soul as yours. Ah! would that, as our love, our birth were equal; for I esteem not the wealth or dignity of worlds equal to the least testimony of your favour. I should be the meanest and vilest of wretches to regard aught beyond the beauties of soul and form that have subdued me so long.'

"I was proceeding, in the tumult of my feelings, to express my gratitude and delight, when a group of ladies and cavaliers appeared in sight, and I followed the princess as she turned to meet the party with a free and even lively and playful air. During the few days that the court sojourned in the country, wholly devoted to the feast, the chase, and similar rural diversions, it became my delightful task to resume my former station, being almost in constant attendance upon the princess. No longer on the list of pages, I had entered upon the more honourable rank of cavalier, while my early intimacy and educa-

tion with the princess, and the respect which she uniformly testified for me in public, acquired for me no little distinction at court. And as the chief object of her Serene Highness the Archduchess, who held paramount sway, was to amuse the mind of the princess, naturally inclined to melancholy, she ordained a solemn festival to grace the close of their residence, after the pleasures of a magnificent chase. The young princesses, along with the ladies of the court, appeared arrayed in the character of Amazons, with high waving plumes on their heads and upon richly-caparisoned palfreys. The Princess Claudia Felice was seen mounted upon a swift courser of a jet black, and adorned with a tuft of feathers, while its fair rider shone bright to the eye in a loosely-folded dress, elegantly suited to the occasion. When she entered into the wood, she drew nearer to me as I rode along at her side, and took occasion, without observation, to inform me of her great desire to obtain some signal triumph over the ferocious prey. I then approached still closer to her, separating from the rest of the party, and penetrating still deeper into the recesses of the wood, which the wild beasts were supposed to haunt in greater numbers. There, without deigning to pursue either stags or hares, or any animals of a less ferocious cast, the hunters prepared to attack a huge wild boar, which came rushing towards us pursued by some of the dogs. Desirous of yielding to the Princess the honour of despatching him, I stepped aside to leave him open to her attack, when she had the good fortune to wound him mortally with her hunting-spear in the head. In a transport of rage, the beast still sprung forward in the same direction, urged on all sides by the dogs, and notwithstanding two pistol-shots, rushing upon her horse that stood in its way, the Princess, by the disorder into which she was thrown, ran the greatest risk of her life. Some of the hunters now eagerly hastened to her assistance, but they were on foot, and before they could arrive I had sprung from my horse between the Princess and the enraged animal, and assaulted it furiously with my sword. Having passed the weapon through its body, I laid it dead at her feet, while, with the utmost presence of mind, not half so much terrified at her own danger as I had been, she said, 'I find it is a great advantage to place myself under your protection; you seem to know how to defend what belongs to you.' 'And what coward would not, when he had to combat in so sweet and glorious a cause?' But the hunters coming up, prevented farther conversation; they raised the enormous animal with difficulty, in order to bear it in triumph before the Princess to meet the rest of the party. Already informed of the accident, the Archduchess was hastening, full of alarm, in the same direction. Shocked at beholding its immense size, on its first appearance, her terror was the next moment changed into an exclamation of triumph when she beheld the beloved Princess unhurt accompanied by me. She received us with the warmest gratulations, bestowing upon me praises and rewards too flattering to recount. The chase then continued with double vigour and animation; the quarry was more than equal to our hopes, and, with the evening festivities, concluded our rural sojourn.

"On the removal of the court to the city, I again returned to my

usual avocations, though without resigning the delightful privilege I enjoyed of continual access to the company of my Princess, and the oftener as I found she dwelt upon my weakness with an eye of tenderness and pity, not of reproach. She still continued to give me open and honourable proofs of her regard, and even to intrust me with her most secret and important views; more especially in respect to a proposed union with the Duke of York, the King of England's brother, since united to the Princess of Modena. Nor did she merely make me her counsellor upon the occasion: she candidly expressed her aversion to the match, and her satisfaction at its rejection.

"About this period died the Empress Margerita Teresa of Austria, consort of the Emperor Leopold, without issue, consequently that great monarch soon directed his views towards another union, and the eyes of the whole world were eagerly fixed upon his future choice. At this time the affair of the Duke of York had already proceeded so far that the Princess would have been compelled to yield a reluctant consent, had not a still more unfortunate proposal intervened. During its whole progress my attention was on the alert, no less from the impassioned interest I felt on my own account than on that of my Princess, whose grief was but too apparent at the idea of being transported into foreign parts, more especially into a country like Britain, where the unruly genius of the people threatened equally the sceptres and the lives of its princes. It was my firm resolution to follow in her train wherever she went, preferring continual servitude in such a cause to all the ease, honours, and emoluments in the world. I valued not the risks and inconveniences I should have to encounter from a nation so inimical to our religion and to good government as the English.[1]

"While in this trying and perilous conjuncture I was awaiting day by day tidings of the conclusion of the nuptials, now near at hand, to judge from the frequent departure of messengers on both sides, what was my secret triumph when the young Princess, one day bursting in upon her attendants, after an audience with the Archduchess, selected me from the number, and bade me follow her into the adjoining gallery. There, leaning upon a balcony overhanging the gardens, she thus addressed me, after a few moments' pause. 'I know not, Count, how you will receive the information I have to communicate, and I am almost doubtful whether I ought to unfold it to you. But as you must still continue to enjoy the privilege of hearing from my own lips whatever concerns my nearest interests, have the goodness to peruse this document, containing the ratification of my marriage with the Emperor Leopold.'

"Having cast my eye over the fatal letters, and even kissed them in token of submission, I threw myself at the Princess's feet, and bowing my head more in sorrow than in submission, I broke out into the following words: 'I cannot express, most illustrious Princess, soon my empress and my queen, the feelings that agitate my bosom. Must I say how much rejoiced I feel at the prospect of your glorious rank, so advantageous to all Germany, and to the interests and

[1] Allowance must here be made for the situation and character of the writer, a good Catholic, the subject of a despotic Government, and imbued with all the prejudices of his times.—*Tr.*

aggrandisement of the empire? Truly honoured do I feel, nor can any words express my gratitude for your condescension in permitting me to hear these tidings from your own lips. It is a distinction'—— 'Oh no, no distinction,' interrupted the Princess, 'for, as Heaven is my witness, noble Sigismond, there is nothing in all these magnificent prospects that affords me half so much pleasure as the idea of being enabled to confer upon you far greater distinction than before. Imagine not that this accession of state will ever change my feelings; the Empress of the Romans will find nothing to blame in the Princess of Inspruck; and therefore it is that I here renew the gift which she formerly gave you. Nor in this do I in the least trench upon the fealty I owe the Emperor as my liege lord and master, inasmuch as the sentiment I am bound to preserve towards him is wholly opposite in its nature to the one I mean ever to retain for you throughout a life of innocence, namely, the tenderest friendship. Yes, I am not afraid to repeat it, Count d'Arco, my love for you appears to have been made in heaven: it is the force of destiny, and the confession of it is due to your superior merit. I have not hitherto asked the least reward for the partiality I entertain towards you: it is now I have to beg a boon of you. It is, that you will consent to share my good fortune with me, nay, to change your country, and absent yourself from me as little as possible. Do this cheerfully, and count upon my gratitude, in proportion as I meet with obedience to these commands. But I must not confer with you longer now; I well know all you would wish to tell me, and if you can understand my feelings as well without giving them a tongue, even what I have already said were needless.' Tears started into her eyes at these last words, but she soon repressed them, and without leaving me time to reply, she hastened out of the gallery to rejoin her party.

"Tidings of these illustrious nuptials getting abroad, the city became one scene of festivity, the respective nations resuming all the hilarity and hopes that had recently been clouded by the death of some of their princes, which threatened a loss of successors in several of the most powerful houses of Germany. A sort of general carnival was proclaimed, and the court, as if to set the most joyous example, ordained, in its liberality, to hold a tourney. It was, perhaps, one of the most sumptuous and magnificent spectacles ever witnessed, the various rencounters taking place only between nobles and cavaliers of the most approved courage and illustrious birth. It being usual in Germany to carry the device and the colour of the lady whom the cavalier serves, conferred with her own hand, it was thus ordered on this glorious occasion as each knight stepped into the field. It happened that one evening, soon after the conclusion of the nuptials, I was in the public audience-chamber, then daily held, when some young triflers began to banter me, inquiring whether I had yet received my favourite colour from my mistress. I know not whether they imagined, as was pretty generally credited, that I had never acquired the affection of any lady of the court, or whether they alluded still more maliciously to the partiality of the Empress, as she seemed to suspect. It is certain she looked much displeased, and the more so as the discourse

terminated in a burst of laughter. Turning towards me, she said in the sweetest tone, 'It is scarcely fair, Count, that while I am present, your modesty should be put to the blush; you must enter the field as my cavalier; here is your device,' untying a green ribbon from her fine arm, which she extended towards me, almost overwhelmed with surprise and joy. Envy and malice became instantly mute, a becoming reverence was felt, and more than one, conversing afterwards upon the beauty and delicacy of the action, declared that they should have valued such a favour beyond the worth of a seigniory. The day appointed for the tournament being arrived, as I was standing at the entrance of my apartment arranging the order of my choicest dresses, intending to appear in some of my richest attire, the equerry of the Empress appeared with a present of two noble steeds, which her majesty entreated I would accept as her cavalier upon the approaching occasion. One of these was of Neapolitan breed, a charger of middling height, but full of fire and spirit. It was jet black, richly-caparisoned, shining in cloth of silver and gold; and the other was a Spanish jennet, of mixed colour, small in its limbs, beautifully caparisoned, and swift as a bird upon the course.

"Exactly at the appointed time I entered among the first into the field, bearing in my plumes and ribbons the colours of the Empress, who, to complete the honour conferred upon me, appeared arrayed in the same, seated upon a sort of throne in the lodge, surrounded by thousands of spectators. The Archduchess Dowager was there, rejoicing in the new fortunes of her daughter, with a train of the noblest ladies in the land, who had attended from the most distant provinces to do honour to the occasion.

"Just before I entered the lists I mounted another charger, bestowed likewise by the Empress, and rode into the ring. The champion who appeared there was of great strength, valour, and experience, and had already maintained the field against numbers of the boldest challengers. It was now my turn to break a spear with him, and the moment the heralds gave signal to start into action, I turned my eyes towards the court-lodge, and met those of the Empress fixed intently upon me. I felt as if suddenly inspired with more than mortal strength and ardour, and such was the force and fury of my charge, that I not only carried the first, but two following lances; in short, I bore away the honour of the day.

"Must I confess all my vanity? Such was my secret triumph, that I would not have exchanged it at that moment for the richest diadem. Not that I was ambitious of vulgar applause, but that day I bore the ensign of my Empress, and proved myself not unworthy of the high distinction she had conferred upon me. Riding up to the royal lodge, I dismounted at the feet of the two princesses, by whom I was received with expressions of applause. They presented me with a rich sword, adorned with jewels, the prize of the victor of the field; while the Empress herself, in the excess of her generous spirit, drew a fine diamond ring from her finger, and presented it to me with compliments of pleasure and congratulation at my triumph.

"But the consummation of my wretchedness was now at hand. The

Empress was preparing to join her august consort, attended by her mother, with the flower of all her nobility, at Gratz. I made one of her train, no less by command than from an unhappy inclination. Nor among the crowds of distinguished nobles who surrounded her did I seem to lose the least portion of my influence. She was even more kind and considerate than before, often declaring that since she was become the spouse of Cæsar, she should be justified in treating her friends with far greater kindness and consideration than she had formerly done. Nor was this all; she obtained for me the favour of her imperial consort, which he frequently displayed before all the court. This was no sooner apparent than I began to receive the obeisance and respects of my equals and superiors; all parties courted my attention, and I might well have indulged a little vanity. But I know not how it was: what to others would have been a source of the richest pleasure, in me gave rise only to feelings of sorrow and regret. I would gladly have exchanged all the power and splendour of Vienna for some quiet refuge in the desert, some secluded abode, such as Heaven has here at length assigned me. So far from entertaining an ambition to extend the sphere of my fame and influence beyond the rank which I enjoyed, I in vain attempted to interest myself in the intrigues and affairs of state. I could not enter into the usual pleasures of the court; my eyes still wandered, and rested only on the fine features of the Empress, absorbed in the contemplation of the mingled majesty, the grace, and the thousand surpassing charms that I found there, and only there. For my passion never betrayed itself beyond my eyes, but to these, when unobserved, I gave free and ample scope, and they told her eloquently all my hopeless anguish, all my love. And they dwelt upon her unreproved, they partook of no other delight; all else appeared vile and worthless to me. Too happy could I have continued to enjoy the mournful pleasure it afforded me! Dearly did I pay its price, for my passion was feeding upon my life. I lost all relish for company and conversation of which she did not form a part, and my health and slumbers became the sacrifice. My pallid looks bore evidence of the struggles within; I attracted the eyes of the whole court, and in a short time I fell sick.

"A slow fever preyed upon my vitals, and the physicians half despaired of my life. It was then I first became sensible how deeply my passion was returned. Whatever the power and influence of a queen could effect in procuring the best attendance and advice, whatever the tenderness, compassion, and fears of the fondest mother or sister could display, were all lavished upon me at that period. The disease, however, had gained too great force, so that daily becoming weaker, I was soon reduced to extremity; my life was hourly despaired of, though I still retained all my faculties as clear and lively as before, and was perfectly resigned to my approaching fate. My sole regret was a dread of not again beholding the object of all my hopes and fears, and my weeping eyes were now continually fixed upon her portrait. While thus engaged, taking, as I truly believed, a fervent and final leave of the features of the only beloved object upon earth, I heard a sudden disturbance in the ante-chamber, and in a few

moments after the name of the Empress was announced It is quite impossible to convey an idea of the emotions which at that moment swelled my breast; so violent and yet so delightful was the shock, that I was just on the point of expiring, when the voice of the Empress seemed to recall me into renewed existence. Approaching close to my side, she exclaimed in a tremulous and impassioned voice, on beholding the condition to which I was reduced, 'Alas! my fond and faithful servant!' and then in a lower tone she continued, 'Ah! Count, and can you leave me thus? I beseech you to pity me and live for me; from my hand receive the renewed health and strength which your physicians have attempted in vain to bestow. Rouse yourself, receive what I have here brought you; take it, and doubt not of the result;' and she administered the medicine with her own hands. She had even dropped it into a gold cup, without permitting my nurse to assist her, and I drank the whole off at her command. Whether it were the delight of again beholding her or the virtue of what she administered, it is certain that I soon felt greatly restored, so much so, indeed, that shedding tears of gratitude, I assured her in another interview that I had drunk life from her hands. Though she said little in return, the serenest joy was depicted on her countenance; she inquired into farther particulars relating to my illness, and the nurse and attendants having withdrawn, out of respect, to a distance, she proceeded to speak more confidentially than she had ever before done. 'Too well, Count, am I aware of the melancholy origin of your sufferings, but do not yield, try to rise above them, and live for the sake of my love.' These words she uttered in so sweet, confiding, and earnest a tone, that I could not for a moment doubt her, and then yielding me her hand, which I pressed ardently to my lips, she left the precious cordial in the gold vase to my care, and took her leave. What with the restorative nature of the elixir and the joy which her presence had inspired, I felt as if created anew, my fever abated, and I was declared out of all danger. On my perfect recovery, however, I no longer appeared at court and in public as before, but secluded myself from state affairs as much as I was permitted. Secret affliction still preyed upon my mind, mournful and appalling images rose in my path, and vainly did I attempt to banish them from my eyes. A deep presentiment of future calamity weighed down my spirit, which future events more than verified I loved the Empress to distraction, I could no longer conceal it either from myself or from her; and though I offered up unceasing prayers to Heaven that I might be enabled to restrain my passion within the due bounds of duty and respect, a thousand schemes for its full indulgence would usurp, in spite of me, the possession of my imagination. With the most gigantic struggles, however, I succeeded in subduing it, more for her sake than my own; feeling my complete power and ascendancy, I scorned rather than feared to use them. For what, indeed, was life to me placed in competition with such hopes? Besides, I took more pride in her grandeur and elevation than if they had been my own. Yet a deep-seated inquietude had for ever destroyed my bosom's peace: she was great, she tried to make me happy, but I—I was the most wretched being

upon the face of the earth. Ah! far unhappier had the veil been then withdrawn from my future destiny, and I could have beheld it in all its naked horrors.

"Thus wearing out my joyless and weary days, it was not long before the Empress became aware of the real state of my feelings She had restored me to fresh life and vigour, and it seemed only to have added poignancy to my sufferings. Unable to support the sight, she one day called me to attend her, as she was walking in the royal gardens. Alluding at once to the unhappy state of my mind, she said that she often wept bitterly over the misfortunes of the companion and friend of her infancy. She could bear it no longer; she gently upbraided me for such a sacrifice of my time and talents, wasting the golden days of youth and manhood in hopeless sorrow—a wilful, passionate grief for what never could be obtained. 'Oh, my dear Count d'Arco!' she continued as the tears came into her eyes, 'if it be any consolation to know you are not the only sufferer (for I cannot see you die), you may indeed be consoled; I will repeat to you all I formerly promised to you It is your late conduct that compels me to it; for it would seem that necessity and impossibility of success are no restraint, as in all other cases, upon the excess of your passionate sorrow. Surely I need not remind you, circumstanced as we are, of all that prudence and propriety require from us. What is it you intend, Count? to live and die thus wilfully unhappy? No, Heaven forbid! I would have your love for me produce far nobler fruits; and as you have always most truly and loyally served me, it would be strange indeed were you now to become the author of all my calamity. You are the sole staff and stay of your house, and you ought to think of establishing it in the land. How many in Germany would feel proud of your alliance! Cast your eyes around, and let me know your choice,' and then she added in a stifled and trembling voice, 'The Emperor and myself will vie with each other in lavishing our regard upon her!' Here she ceased, as if recovering from a strong effort, while I stood fixed to the earth like a statue, unable to utter any reply. At length raising my eyes to hers, and heaving a deep sigh, I replied, 'Were it in my power, most illustrious lady, to appear as cheerful as I know the limits of my duty in regard to your imperial Highness, you would behold me as happy as I am now hopeless and miserable. What I have most to regret is the number of your benefits thrown away upon one who, however grateful, is incapable of taking advantage of them. But as it is the lot of humanity more or less to suffer, so it has been my unhappy fate to behold all the most desirable blessings, except the only one I valued, within my grasp; ambition, wealth, and influence became in my eyes worse than nothing—emptiness, ashes, dust! Bitter as it is, I must yield to my destiny; yet I would not willingly say anything to afflict you, my earliest companion, playfellow, and friend! Alas! my empress and queen, dreadful consummation of all my woes, forgive me! I am so very unhappy, far too unhappy to avail myself of your generous proposal. For I had rather suffer increased anguish for my loss than ever consent to receive consolation in the manner you wish me. Not that I feel less deeply the

kind and noble motives that have induced your Imperial Highness to promote my welfare by every means in your power, more especially in this last instance, while at the same time I beseech you thus, upon my knees, to permit me to decline it!' 'What, then,' exclaimed the Empress in a disturbed accent, 'you will not allow me to make you happy in my own way!' 'Yes, most honoured and adored lady,' I returned hastily, 'provided Heaven would listen to my vows.' 'And what may they be?' she rejoined; 'quick, tell me what they are.' 'That I may be speedily restored to the state in which I was before your majesty saw me; that I may die; being unable much longer to sustain the passion that assails me, that haunts me with the power of a demon, both by day and night, compelling me to break through the bounds of respect and reverence due to you as my empress;' and bursting into a fresh flood of tears, I clasped her hands to my lips, as I again fell at her feet.

"'Oh, Heavens, Sigismond! what is it you have said?' she exclaimed in as angry a tone as she could command; 'is this the promise you gave me? You vowed that you would never leave me, and now we shall be compelled to part for ever. What have I done to offend you, that you should treat me thus? Have I ever broken the promise I gave you? Ah! ungrateful Sigismond, you are dissatisfied with the gift of this poor heart, of a love so different from your own. Should not this be sufficient to banish such a degree of hopeless sorrow from your breast? Reflect a moment upon my rank; think how much I have confessed to you, and continue miserable if you can. Hitherto I have shown the utmost confidence, expecting in return proofs of your fidelity and friendship. Your life is dear to me as my own; your affliction deprives me of repose; and if you truly love me, you will endeavour to surmount this idle grief before you give occasion to the world to treat our names with a degree of freedom fatal to our reputation, our honour, and perhaps our lives.' Then giving me her hand, not without the deepest emotion on both sides, I pressed it to my lips, and the next moment I found myself alone.

"From that period, though I did not wholly banish my former sorrow, I contrived to dissimulate it better, and on more mature consideration, I felt that the Empress had very good reasons for accusing me of ingratitude and indiscretion. Bent upon repressing, as far as possible, the excess of my passion, I resumed my former plan of riding, hunting, engaging in the lists, and entering into all parties, affecting an air of serenity and pleasure that I was far from feeling. I was soon rewarded with the smiles of the Empress and the notice of her august consort, both of whom lavished upon me fresh marks of consideration.

"I persevered in this course for a length of time, and soon began to experience its good effects. Long habit, gradually producing a change in my feelings, led me to dwell less upon myself, and finally, upon the origin of all my woes I became more tranquil, began to feel an interest in the affairs of life, and attended much less frequently in the suite and at the parties of the Empress Just as I began to flatter myself that there was yet something to live for in the world, I heard of the sudden indisposition of her I had so long loved. At first it excited

in the physicians no kind of alarm, but it soon became more serious in its progress. The fever increased, while the languid looks and the extreme exhaustion of the patient after it had been subdued, gave rise to doubts, and doubts to fears. My former passion now revived with redoubled force; all her kindness and excellence rose fresh to my recollection, and I was truly to be pitied. Finding herself rapidly growing worse, the Empress expressed a wish to have her favourite physician, Gianforte, sent for from Padua, his reputation having spread throughout all Germany. No one's anxiety equalled mine to hear of his arrival. I set out to hasten his approach, and never was an oracle listened to with half the awe I felt when he first opened his lips. After hearing the opinion of her other physicians, who seemed to consider her illness more of a chronic than of an acute kind, he begged to be permitted to see her without loss of time. Upon his return, he declared that so far from there being no immediate danger, as he had been led to expect, he did not think it probable that she could survive many days. Alas! who could pretend to depict the terrific shock, the horror that thrilled through my veins, when I heard such a prognostic uttered by so celebrated a physician and in so calm a tone. A sudden feeling of desolation overwhelmed my spirit; but I am sure you will excuse me, you will permit me to pass more rapidly over this portion of my story. Enough that the unhappy presage was fulfilled exactly at the period predicted. In her very last moments her thoughts were still with me, and she repeatedly expressed her wish that I might continue in the Emperor's favour, and enjoy the same honourable privileges that I had before done. During her illness I had frequent access to her, having ever been one of her most faithful officers, with the full approbation of the Emperor. Often would she raise her languid eyes to mine with an eloquent appeal I alone could understand; often murmur some unfinished words, as if aware of her approaching doom. One day feeling herself worse, she sent for me to her bedside, in the presence of the Emperor, and welcoming me with a serene and almost happy air, the moment she saw me, she said, 'I wished, my kind Sigismond, to see you once more before I die, in the hope of finding mercy and forgiveness.' I burst into a flood of tears on hearing these words, tears which not even the presence of the Emperor could restrain. 'Does it displease you,' she continued, 'that I am going to join the blessed spirits of the faithful and the good in the mansions of eternal love? There I may surely be permitted to pray that you may be better rewarded for your long and faithful services than my shorter sojourn here would permit. I have already recommended all my faithful servants to the Emperor, among whom, on every account, he well knows that you occupy the first place.'

"Addressing herself next to her royal consort, she thus continued. 'Did I imagine, my dear lord, that it would prove any alleviation of your regret at my not having presented you with an offspring to give you one well worthy of your adoption, I would point out Count d'Arco as best entitled to your entire confidence and regard; for he never betrayed his trust, nor ever committed a wrong, I feel well assured.' She then added other wishes, which were lost in my bitter sobs and

cries. I was at length obliged to be conveyed almost by force out of the apartment, and laid upon my own couch. Not a moment's rest did I enjoy for a period of many days; so that, upon hearing of the fatal tidings, I was already in a high fever, which did not, however, prevent me from rising to behold, for the last time, her beloved remains. Alas! too surely did I find her laid out in state, surrounded by her weeping domestics and friends. What were the mingled emotions of my bosom as I approached that spot! When the funeral torches burst suddenly upon my view, when I recollected each familiar place where we had played together as children, grown up together, as it were, in the bands of youthful innocence, joy, and ripening love, along with all her numerous kindnesses and endearments, I felt struck to the very soul. Still, with a kind of reckless wretchedness, I advanced closer to the bier, and gazed wildly and wistfully upon those lovely yet majestic features, until the spectators began to think me either seized suddenly with indisposition or quite insane. I wept not, I uttered not a word, but I could not remove my eyes from that pale, and gentle, and sweetly majestic face, alas! even in death too lovely and beautiful!

"Upon recovering out of the strange trance in which I had been so long absorbed, I thrice attempted to run my sword through my body, until I was secured and borne away from the distressing scene. Yet such was the degree to which the Empress had been beloved by her servants, that even this excited no unusual suspicions; and when I became somewhat calmer, I seemed to hear a voice that whispered comfort to me, and peace and joy from another sphere. 'True, too true,' I exclaimed, as if in answer to the celestial sounds; 'for what is the end of all the love, the grace, the beauty, and the glory of earthly things? Place our faith, as we will, upon the world, and the votaries of the world, what shall we finally reap from its rank soil but ashes, dust, and tears? My beloved, my soul's mistress and sovereign, is gone, and shall I live again to all the follies and vanities of earth, deprived of the light and beauty, the very guiding star of my destiny, and without which I shall be driven upon life's troubled ocean, at the mercy of darkness, winds, and floods? Forbid it, Heaven! I would rather, far rather follow thee, O blessed spirit, safely into port, where thou hast taken up thine everlasting rest. But I fear me I have not strength of wing to raise me to that heavenly height or merit the assisting influence of thy glory. Yet deign, exalted spirit, to receive the only sacrifice I can make thee—of myself so may we thus be restored to each other's love in blissful paradise!'

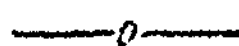
"From that period, gentle lady, I never left my apartment until the last obsequies were performed, and even the public mourning at an end. My sufferings both of mind and body were extreme; and when I at length recovered, my first visit was to the Emperor. He received me very graciously, doubtless expecting that I had attended for the purpose of aspiring to the enjoyment of some of the fruits of the late Empress's kind and earnest recommendations. He seemed a little surprised then, when I candidly informed him that the circumstance of his royal consort's decease had so strongly reminded me of the vanity of all earthly pursuits, that, with his imperial majesty's permis-

sion, I felt a decided inclination to retire from the tumult and business of court; moreover, that I so far confided in his royal clemency and compassion, as to hope he would not refuse me his royal leave to take shelter in the secluded hermitage of the Penitent Friars. The Emperor regarded me very earnestly some time before he replied, whether he imagined that I was chagrined at losing the support of the Empress in the midst of my courtly career, or that he no longer wished to oppose my inclination, even if suspicious of the real cause or not, certain it is that he kindly accorded me the space of a year to consider further of the trial; so that, if at the close of that period I still persisted in my wish for seclusion, I might pursue my own pleasure. That year he wished me to spend in my travels, as the most likely method of removing my grief, and I consented to the royal wishes. After arranging my domestic affairs, I visited Italy, for the most part from a desire of paying my vows at several celebrated shrines, and beholding the territories of the Holy Church.

"Besides my own fortune, I had received handsome presents from the late Empress, the most precious of which I carefully preserved. A few of these I deposited, not without many tears, at the shrine of our Lady of Loretto, adorning the sacred image of the Virgin with gifts of which I esteemed every inferior object unworthy. The rest of my resources I distributed in pious alms, in sacrificial offerings and other holy uses, besides daily occupying myself in some works of charity, which I judged to be the sweetest incense I could offer up to the soul of my beloved, my infant companion, my early friend and benefactress, my sovereign, now no more. In heaven only, where all hearts are known, may she yet be mine!"

Carlo Lodoli.

CARLO LODOLI,



NOVELLA II.

A CERTAIN Sanmarinista, professor of law, and a doctor by birth, a privilege that was enjoyed by the Malvasia family of old, was one day leisurely journeying from his native city in order to try a cause in the criminal court. As he approached to pass the river at low-water point, it chanced that he encountered two persons who appeared to be engaged in a warm controversy.

Upon inquiring into its merits, he found that one Tizio had borne his companion, Sempronio, over the water on his shoulders, the condition being that the bearer was to be carried back upon their return, which the other refused to do. The cause of strife being thus explained, the doctor gave his opinion, and, referring to the parity of robustness between the parties and to the terms of the previous promise, decreed, with the addition of much persuasive oratory, that "he who had borne his friend should in turn by his friend be carried." Imagine his vexation, then, to find his eloquence thrown away. The obstinate Sempronio, who held the best side of the staff, having got his passage, refused to listen to reason Finding all the most simple and demonstrative arguments of no avail, he resolved to try the magical force of a few hard words, and cried out in a voice of thunder, "O perjured villain! wilt thou wait till the great Hugo Grotius pulls off thy shoes, till the Lord Baron Puffendorff sets thy friend upon thy shoulders, and the Duke of Cumberland gives thee a royal kick behind to push thee into the water?" At these solemn and appalling names, the wretch was no longer proof against the doctor's appeal, but mounting Tizio upon his shoulders, proceeded to ford the river as fast as he could, leaving our lawyer to prosecute his journey with much complacency at leisure. In the course of time, having despatched his cause, and returning by the same route, upon arriving at the ford, he found that his ass expressed some degree of reluctance to pass, belonging, apparently, to that race of intelligent animals of old who were occasionally apt to hold colloquies with their masters. Availing himself of the same privilege, he stopped. "What is the matter?" said the doctor. "Dost thou wish to drink? Drink thy fill!" "I want no drink," replied the beast. "Then," said the doctor, with great composure, "get thee along!" though, in fact, he was not a little perplexed and astonished on receiving an answer, so many men being accustomed to address the animals they ride without expecting one. "But," continued his ass, "how can

you expect such a thing? you, who just now decided that he who carried the other over here ought to be carried back. Do you think I did not hear you? and do you think I have not a word to say in my turn upon the subject? So dismount, my good master; get off my back, for I will go no farther; and, for once in your life, after so many years' service, condescend to carry me across."

It was now that the doctor began to feel really surprised, as well as displeased, at the turn affairs seemed to have taken; for having laughed until he became serious, the water growing deeper, he was in haste to proceed. So he began to bastinado the too reasonable beast, and words and blows growing warmer and warmer, it soon became one of the best argued cases that ever took place between a doctor and an ass. It was in vain the former pointed out the difference between them; the other replied that among his ancestors of the ancient breed of asses there had been many doctors, perhaps far more famous than he; and added other things equally sarcastic and offensive. During this altercation, as the evening was coming on, and the doctor began to feel a little uncomfortable at being left alone on the road, it was quite requisite he should come to some decision. So looking round, to be sure that no one saw him, he got off as he was ordered; and, shivering at the very idea, he began to undress himself, and stepped with horror into the water, crying, in an indignant tone, "Come, thou foul and wilful beast; give me thy fore feet up here, and be sure you do not lay more weight on me than you can help!" "Trust me," said the ass, as he raised his fore quarters; but being more lengthy than his master, he could not manage in this way with his hinder legs The doctor next tried to carry him crossways, so that his ribs should not graze his body, but he found this was quite as bad; and he thirdly bound him fast by the legs, and threw him across his shoulders, and this was worst of all. Finally, by one expedient or other, he contrived to get three or four paces into the water, when both fell down together, and had very nearly been drowned.

And too true a saying it is, "As long as the man sits upon the ass all goes well," whereas, should the ass get the upper hand, it is bad for the beast, and worse for his master. Hence we may easily understand and apply the joke, which the ass wished to pass upon the doctor; for if the fool of the family take the lead, his dependent brethren will be sure to smart for it; while the arrogant usurper will only involve himself in embarrassments, and be exposed to general ridicule.

NOVELLA IV.

WHETHER Democritus of old had good reasons for laughing so heartily at everything he saw, has not yet been decided by common consent among our philosophers, nor will it, perhaps, ever be settled. Whether right or wrong in his ideas on the subject, it is certain that, if the happiness of this life really consist in being upon good terms

with ourselves, he must, inasmuch as laughter is a mark of self-complacency, have been one of the happiest men alive. Judging, however, from a passage contained in an ancient writer, recently discovered among the manuscripts of the Cardinal Bessarione, we are authorised in believing that he had not invariably the laugh on his side, as was shown in the instance of a certain sophist who ventured to treat the philosopher as he treated other fools. We are, moreover, informed that one of his best scholars, being heartily ashamed of seeing his master guilty of such a folly, bethought himself of hitting upon some expedient to bring him to conduct himself like other people, and yet without offending him.

An occasion soon offered; when his master gave him directions to take the measurement of one of his wells (for he was a great water-drinker), this apt scholar availed himself of the opportunity to instruct his pedagogue by speaking out openly to him like an honest man. "Here it is, master; I have brought you the exact measurement, that is, from the top to the bottom (as I could not manage it the other way), with a stone fastened to the end of this rope; but what distance it may be from the bottom to the top, that, for want of ladders, I cannot find out." "Ha, ha, ha!" cried the laughing philosopher; "good, very good! Why, jolterhead, is it not the very same as you have here got? From top to bottom, from bottom to top, tell me, where is the difference, I pray? Oh, oh! I ought to thank you for the joke; surely I never laughed so much before!" The wily disciple stopped until his master had almost laughed himself out of breath, when, with the singular modesty becoming a pupil, he thus replied, "Yes, so, of a truth, it would appear to us at first view, I should have thought as much myself, had you not yourself led me to doubt the evidence of my senses For when I remarked in all your behaviour the bitter spite you bore against the sophist Theagenes whenever he laughed at you, I felt inclined to inquire, is there not exactly the same degree of distance between *you* and *him* as between *him* and *you*? Why, therefore, do you pretend to laugh with impunity at him and his compeers, when you are not willing that he should do the same by you?"

Democritus had hardly begun to apply his head to the solution of this somewhat novel, far-fetched, and knotty point (advanced, however, with singular modesty and diffidence), when, aware how much reason there was in his pupil's question, he conceived it the wisest way not to attempt an answer. Turning towards him and embracing him, he said, "I thank you, my dear pupil, from the bottom of my heart, and let Theagenes in future laugh at me as much as he pleases; it will not disturb me a jot; for he has exactly the same right to laugh at me as I have to laugh at him"

Now if, according to these principles of moral justice, we were to give and take, bear and forbear, instead of wishing to establish our own opinions in the face of all obstacles, there would be much less pride in the world than at present exists, and we should enjoy much more peace and satisfaction.

Domenico Maria Manni,

DOMENICO MARIA MANNI.



THIS writer was a Florentine, and flourished during the early part of the eighteenth century. He is known as the author of a variety of works, distinguished no less for their taste and elegance than for their depth and accuracy of research and strength of reasoning. A sound and accomplished scholar, several of his treatises were written in Latin, remarkable for its pure and classic taste. He was a profound and voluminous commentator, and celebrated for his antiquarian learning, his treatise upon ancient seals and medals having been consulted by most of his successors. He published editions of several scarce and valuable works, some of which he rescued from oblivion, and put forth improved editions of many of the rarer novelists. We owe to him an historical account of the "Decameron," and of the novel of Grasso Legnaiuolo, published at Florence in 1744, extremely rare, a translation from which will be found in the present selection. In addition to his efforts as a novelist, in which he appears as one of the best writers of the last century, he acquired no little reputation from the extent and variety of his historical notices. Those relating to the ancient baths, to the amphitheatre, and to the academies of Florence, justly obtained for him a high reputation among antiquarians and men of letters, while he was equally celebrated for his wit and for his conversational powers.

NOVELLA I.

THERE is no longer reason to doubt the truth of some very singular circumstances that are said to have occurred between two lovers, Ginevra degli Amieri and Antonio Rondinelli, and particularly when we reflect how generally they have been credited during upwards of three ages. They are as follows:—

Antonio had become deeply enamoured of the beauties of the lady Ginevra, and had persevered in his attachment for more than four years subsequent to 1396, against the express wishes of her father, who wished to bestow her hand upon one of the Agolanti family, named Francesco, as being of superior fortune to his rival, although not so agreeable in the eyes of the fair Ginevra. She may be said, therefore, to have been forced into the arms of Francesco, as she yielded a reluctant consent to her parents' will; while unfortunately

the passion of Antonio seemed only to acquire fresh vigour from the bitter disappointment of all his hopes. In the wretchedness of his heart, he vowed never to bestow his hand upon another, and he still indulged himself in the sad consolation of gazing upon her at all public festivals, in churches, and private assemblies.

Now it chanced that in the great plague of 1400, which ravaged so many cities of Italy, and especially Florence, the fair Ginevra was taken sick, and owing either to the neglect of the physicians or the malignant nature of the disease, soon after fell an apparent victim to its rage. Strong hysterical affections, then little understood, had preceded her decease, and every one around her supposed that she had ceased to breathe. Immediate interment also taking place, as was usual in those periods of distress, she narrowly escaped the fate, most probably shared by many in such seasons of terror, of being inhumed alive. Borne by a body of priests, she was laid with little ceremony in the family vault belonging to the chapel of her ancestors, and to this day the place is pointed out to the curious stranger who visits the spot. She was greatly lamented by her husband, her friends, and indeed by all who knew her virtues; but the grief of none was equal to that of Antonio Rondinelli when he heard of her sudden decease

Esteemed by all ranks, only a few months a bride, her supposed fate drew tears from many eyes; yet only a few hours of that fatal night had elapsed, when, awaking out of her lethargic slumber, the poor young creature opened her eyes. The moon shone brightly, when, shivering with the cold damp air of the vault (it being the month of October), she attempted to raise herself up, and in a short time began to recognise the place in which she lay. Commending herself to the mercy of Heaven and all its guardian saints, she next strove to release herself from her unearthly garments, and perceiving a glimmer of light through a crevice in the door, she succeeded, though faint and exhausted, in reaching the entrance of the vault. Having mounted the steps, by degrees she removed a portion of the covering least secured, through which she had observed the light, and at length, with extreme difficulty, issued forth. Terror and despair had hitherto given her strength, while the cold air now braced her nerves, and, thinly clad as she was, she pursued her way (hence called Via della Morte) towards her husband's house along the Corso degli Adimari, now named Via dei Calzajoli, and along some bye-streets, until she reached her own door. Her husband, who happened to be sitting sorrowfully over the fire just before retiring to rest, himself went to the door, and on beholding such a figure, and hearing a low and plaintive voice, he started back and made the sign of the cross, believing it was a spirit. Then invoking her to depart, he hastily shut the door in her face and went trembling to bed, vowing to have more masses and alms offered up the following day for the repose of her soul.

Ginevra wept. "Is this the love," she cried, "he should have borne me? Alas! alas! what shall I do? Must I perish of cold and hunger in the streets?" Then recollecting her father's house, she pursued her weary way thither; but he was from home, and her mother, from an upper storey, hearing a weak, plaintive voice, interrupted with sobs

and shiverings, exclaimed in a paroxysm of pious fear, "Get thee gone in peace, blessed spirit," and shut down the window, in hopes that she had laid the ghost. The wretched girl then, wringing her hands, resumed her way, and attempted to reach the abode of one of her uncles, resting frequently as she went; yet, after all, she found her toil still unrecompensed, receiving the same reply wherever she went, "Get thee gone in peace;" after which polite reception the door was closed in her face. At length, weary with suffering, she laid herself down to sleep, or rather to die, under the little lodge of San Bartolommeo, when, just before closing her eyes, she bethought herself, as a last resource, of her former lover, from whom she was then at no great distance. "Yet what reception," she mentally exclaimed, "ought I to expect after the slights and ill treatment that he has met with at the hands of me and my family, when I consider, too, how those who professed to love me have driven me from their doors!" It was with a misgiving heart then that she knocked at Antonio's door. Whether or not we are to suppose that he possessed superior strength of courage or of love beyond all her natural relatives whom she had tried, certain it is that, instead of being terrified at her appearance, he advanced boldly and even eagerly towards her, gazing upon her with fixed looks, and drawing his breath deeply; then apparently recognising her, he exclaimed in a kind and gentle tone, "Art thou indeed Ginevra, or her pure and sainted spirit?" and the next moment he felt her, a living and breathing woman, in his arms! Calling out loudly for assistance, his mother and servants came running to inquire what had happened, most of whom on beholding her ran away again faster than they had approached. But the happy Antonio, bearing her in his arms, had her speedily wrapped in warm linen, and placed upon a couch between his mother and another female, in order to restore her to a natural warmth. Still he indulged fears that she would not revive, while he availed himself of everything that art or nature could furnish to cherish the vital flame. It would be difficult to decide whether, as he watched her gradually reviving, his feeling of unutterable joy was not greater than had been that of his overwhelming grief on first hearing tidings that her beloved spirit had fled. He lingered around her bed or was ever at her side, unwilling to trust her even to the most confidential servants of the household, and administering every cordial to her with his own hand. When she was at last enabled to sit up, she fell at her benefactor's, at her lover's feet, and while she poured forth her unutterable gratitude in floods of tears and passionate exclamations, she yet, with her characteristic purity and virtue, besought him to have pity on her, to respect her honour, and to add to all his generosity and tenderness the disinterestedness of a true friend. For he knew, she continued, that there was nothing she could, nothing she ought to deny him, after such unheard of kindness, and that she was henceforward his handmaid and his slave. Still she should prefer death to the loss of virtue or of reputation, and if he truly loved her, he would respect them; and that he did love her as none ever before loved was evident in the charity, courage, and true tenderness with which he had taken her to his arms when husband, father, mother, and all friends and relatives forsook her.

Antonio, delighted to dwell upon her voice, hung enraptured over her as she spoke, and then falling before her upon his knees, he entreated her forgiveness if he had in the slightest instance forgotten himself, or transgressed the strictest bounds prescribed by reverence and honour. She could only answer him with a fresh gush of tears, as she pressed his hands with tremulous emotion to her heart and lips; while, soothing her alarm, the kind Antonio assured her that she owed him nothing, that he was more than sufficiently rewarded in beholding her restoration to health and beauty, and that he wished and would accept nothing from her gratitude alone.

"Did she," he continued, with an expression of anguish and alarm, "insist upon being instantly restored to her husband's arms? Then let her speak it. Hesitate not, spare me not," he cried; "I will do it, though I die for it!" "Ah! never, never!" exclaimed the wretched girl; "wedded though I be, I will not see him, I will not dwell with him more. Let me rather fly to a nunnery, and again become buried alive for ever. Besides, death hath dissolved our union: I was dead to him; nay, he interred me, and but now drove me from his presence. Mention him no more," she continued, "for were it requisite, I would appeal to our tribunal, to every tribunal upon earth! Have they not all, moreover, numbered me with the dead, and rejected me when I rose from the grave by little less than a miracle?" The delighted Antonio, on receiving these sweet assurances, could only fall at her feet and thank her with his tears; but they were tears of ecstatic pleasure, soon smiled and kissed away. For as if to promote the wishes which both in their secret hearts indulged, Agolanti, the former husband of the lady, being of a covetous disposition, disposed of the whole of her ornaments and dresses, which Antonio, who had his eye upon all the proceedings of her relations, very soon contrived to get into his own hands. Agolanti shortly afterwards meeting with a lady of fortune, paid his addresses to her, upon which Antonio and his beautiful Ginevra, no longer hesitating what course to pursue, resolved to secure the blissful object they had in view, and to unite their fate everlastingly in one. The new marriage deeds being therefore drawn out according to the usual forms without the knowledge of even her nearest relatives, who had scarcely yet finished offering up masses for her soul, of which they imagined, from what they had seen, that she stood in the utmost need, she proceeded to church early one Sunday morning to confer her hand upon the happy Antonio. Her future mother-in-law, with a single servant, and Antonio following them, as if going to hear mass, formed the whole of the wedding-party. When just on the point of entering the church, they encountered another procession: it was that of her late husband Agolanti, her mother, and other friends, proceeding exactly on the same destination. What was here to be done, and which did it behove to yield precedence to the other? With the greatest presence of mind, Antonio's bride accosted her mother, who in some surprise and terror, with the rest of the party, kept at a respectful distance. Yet it being daylight, and observing Ginevra so well dressed, and looking so beautiful and so happy, they felt somewhat reassured when she accosted them, and briefly

informed them that as her physicians had given her over, the priest administered extreme unction, and her friends and relatives performed her last obsequies, she had taken her final leave, and no longer belonged to them; that it was plain, moreover, that they wished it to be so, for that after she had been miraculously restored to them, no one had taken the least notice of her, but, on the other hand, had driven her from her own doors; that he alone from whom she expected least had received her like a good Samaritan, and opened his house and arms to her, restoring her to life and love; and that, by all the laws of heaven and earth, she would henceforth be his; for without his assistance she must assuredly have died; so that, having every claim to her gratitude, she had consented to become wholly his. Then taking a hasty farewell of her mother and her friends, the parties separated, not choosing to perform the respective ceremonies at the same time and in the same church. Upon their return, after the marriage-feast was concluded, a messenger arrived with an order from the bishop, and, in the presence of her former husband, summoned for the occasion, the prelate declared the ecclesiastical sentence, of which the tenor ran: that the fair Ginevra should remain the wife of Antonio, and that her former husband should restore the whole of her dower, since it was clear that the lady had been dead and buried, but, to the glory of the Church, had been miraculously restored.

Autore Ignoto.

AUTORE IGNOTO.

(BY AN ANONYMOUS NOVELIST.)

A CERTAIN Persian peasant chanced one morning to be carrying a fine kid to market, riding upon his ass with the dainty animal following him. The better to secure his charge, he had tied a little bell to its neck. He had journeyed about the distance of two miles, when he had the ill luck to fall in with three robbers, famous in those parts for the audacity and cunning of their thefts. "Lo!" said one of them to his companions, as he beheld the countryman approaching, "here comes a fine fish for our net; I think he is worth hooking. I will bet you what you please I can run away with that pretty kid without the stupid wretch perceiving it." "And I," said the other, "that I will take the beast he rides upon with his own permission, and he shall moreover thank me for it." "Pshaw!" cried the third, "why boast of this? It is mere child's play, unworthy of our skill and of the reputation we enjoy. For my part, as you have left me nothing else, I will strip him of the very clothes he has on his back, and he shall salute me by the tender names of benefactor and friend." "To the trial, then," cried all three at once "Let the first boaster," said the last, "proceed to work first." So forth he stepped, following the poor rustic quietly at a distance. Soon unloosing the bell from the kid's neck with infinite dexterity, he tied it to the ass's tail, and away he went with the kid in a contrary direction. The poor man, still hearing the tinkling of the bell, concluded all was safe behind him, and merrily jogged along his way. At length, however, he happened to turn round, and hearing the bell but not seeing the goat, he was greatly puzzled what to think or which way to look, running hastily in different directions, and inquiring of every one he met whether they had seen his kid and the thief who had stolen it. The second robber, upon this, coming forward, said, "It is true I saw a man running away in that direction just now: he had a goat, and I will be sworn it was yours." So away went the countryman, leaving his ass in the thief's care, and thanking him at the same time for his kindness. After running himself out of breath, he found his search was all in vain; and making a few more unavailing efforts in various directions, he was fain to return, as he fondly dreamed, to his ass, which he had left in the kind stranger's protection. "Alas!" he cried, "where is my friend? where is my donkey? Surely, surely the thief has not stolen them!" Perceiving at length the full extent of his misfortune, he began to blas-

pheme bitterly, cursing the day he was born, and Mahomet and al the prophets "But the next rascal who imposes upon me," he cried "must be made of very different stuff." Whilst he was in this way defying all the powers of mischief to league against him in future, and committing a thousand extravagances, he happened to hear a deep groan uttered not far from him, and going a little farther, he found a man weeping bitterly. The rustic said, "What is the matter with you that you make such a lamentable noise? Do you think that you are as unfortunate as I am, who have lost two beautiful beasts, a goat and an ass, at a single throw? I was going with my lad to market, when lo! two detestable monsters in the shape of thieves have robbed me of all I had in the world, the foundation of my future fortunes." But the third robber only replied, "Get thee gone, fool, and do not pre tend to compare miseries with me! Why, I have dropped a case of the most precious jewels, directed to the cadi, into this well; the value o them would not only buy all the asses and goats in the world, but al Persia into the bargain; and what is more, if I do not find them, th cadi will hang me up by the neck." On saying this, he again com menced his cries, to such a doleful tune, that not even the unhapp rustic was proof against them. "Then why not strip and dive for them instead of raising all this clamour?" he cried; "the well is not so dee as to drown you, nor to break your neck if you should fall." "Alas!" said the thief, "I can neither dive nor swim; I should assuredly perish Would any one take compassion on me and go down, I would give him ten pieces of gold to find them." "Would you so?" exclaimed th joyous rustic, snatching at the offer; "this is an opportunity to redeem my losses with a vengeance. It will pay me double, both for the go and the ass;" and forthwith he proceeded to strip himself; the balancing himself on the edge of the well, he sprang in, plunging an diving, and swimming in all directions; yet all in vain, for no treasur was to be found.

At length, having explored all the corners, he was glad to get ou again, and looked somewhat anxiously for his clothes, as he found i beginning to be very cold. What a consummation of his sorrows! H beheld neither his friend nor his garments; and, for the third time he perceived too late that he had been cheated. To crown his mis fortunes, he was compelled to return home in this pitiable condition where his wife first began to ridicule him, and then gave him a sound beating.

Girolamo Padovani.

GIROLAMO PADOVANI.

NOVELLA I.

THE family of the baron of Carolich consisted of three sons. From their earliest infancy he had devoted them to such studies as he deemed most essential in forming the characters of useful and honourable men. With the second, however, named Borso, he had a difficult card to play; there was nothing to which he would devote himself, such was his levity, his violence, his unsociable and unmanageable disposition. At fifteen years old he knew no more than a child, and his father sometimes actually despaired of him. "What shall I do," he would often exclaim, "with this wild, ungovernable wretch? He is worse than a wild beast to manage; and if he continues in my family, he is enough to ruin the whole household as well as himself. And yet, whither can I send him? what would he do elsewhere?" Out of patience, at length, he one day beckoned to him: "Borso, my boy," he exclaimed, "you are become a very grief and burden to me; you will apply yourself to no pursuit; how, then, are you ever likely to succeed? What sort of figure will you make when grown up, as ignorant as you now are?" "I have decided what I will be," returned the youth in a dogged tone, "I will be a soldier" "So," replied his father, "you have *decided*, and you *will* be a soldier? Why, that is the language of a clown, not of a gentleman's son. But let it go, to expect manners from such as thou would be folly indeed. But if thou art bent upon becoming a cut-throat, even commence thy trade; if not, hit upon something else thou wouldst better like; it is all one; for I assure thee my house will not much longer hold us both. My fortune is by no means great, and my younger son's expectations are still less; so it is time for you to think of fixing upon your future residence and occupation." "I have said it once," retorted the ungainly youth; "I will go and be a soldier." "And I," said his father, "tell thee thou shalt be a soldier I am quite content."

Of a truth, the baron was a kind, good-hearted man, and, much in the manner of the vulgar, apt to judge of a soldier's qualifications from his outside, and from a boasting and rough manner, equal to bustle and fight its way; and already in his mind's eye he beheld his son Borso figuring as a field-marshal, especially when he reflected upon his hot-headed fury and rash temper.

Soon after this conversation, the young Cavalier del l'Aquila arrived

from Germany on a visit to the baron. He had received his education at one of those military schools in that country which are the great supply of young officers for the imperial army. He was just in the flower of his days, of a handsome person, accomplished manners, and with good qualities, superior even to his address. To say nothing of his acquaintance with the fine arts, his knowledge and acquirements were surpassed by his modesty, which threw a charm around his character, and placed his virtues in the fairest light. He betrayed nothing of youth except in his countenance; he had nothing of the bold stare affected by military fops; his open brow appeared the seat of candour and modesty, which, united to his elegant conversation and manners, exhibited a pleasing and lively portrait of modest virtue, drawn upon a rich and solid ground, which added strength and beauty to his character.

He was courted in all private and public assemblies. His respectful demeanour towards persons of greater age and experience than himself, never arguing with them as if one of their equals, without being purposely drawn out by them, rendered him a favourite with all. His language was flowing, exact, and free from any kind of affected or dogmatical tone, while his sentiments were advanced with an air of caution and reserve, a conciliatory manner that invites the attention of the audience before they apprehend our meaning. Invariably delicate and discreet, he always evinced a due respect for the opinion of others, though without sacrificing his own sincerity. He replied to downright assertions or contradictions only by a smile, and received applause with the modesty of true merit, which, ambitious of esteem, is fearful only of not meriting it. In short, he united many of those opposite qualities which please in others, win the heart, and command the esteem of all parties. All these were new and delightful to the society at Modena, whose young men, more especially those from the country, were too apt to study a false courage and vaunting language as their rule of manners.

The baron was enchanted with his young friend, admiring his singular delicacy and propriety of conduct, which gave a pleasing relief to his more solid qualities. He soon pronounced the young Cavalier Aquila to be the most perfect model of youth he had ever seen, though there was one thing that perplexed him extremely. He could not conceive how such characters could be turned out of a military academy, or how they could possibly succeed in a military career. As for his son Borso, he pronounced the young gentleman a mere milksop, destitute of true spirit and common courage, without strength or capacity, though he still felt something that prevented him telling him so to his face.

In the meanwhile, the baron sought the best means of promoting Borso's views. There was an old Italian officer, a very respectable man, who joined young Aquila soon after his arrival. He had served several campaigns against the French under the imperial banners, where he distinguished himself by his skill and bravery. The baron having applied to him, and expressed his desire that his son should return with him into Germany, the other declared he should be happy

to take him under his charge. "He is a boy," said the baron, "who has given me some trouble; but I trust he will do credit to me at last. He has a *decided* taste for the profession; he *will* be a soldier; is not that, think you, a good sign?"

The officer congratulated the baron, and wished to be introduced to the youth in order to acquaint himself with his qualifications. In a few days our young Achilles was introduced to him, and the officer entered upon an examination of his merits. But he had little satisfaction in the task with one who seemed to have confounded all distinctions between right and wrong, and who made a boast of some of his worst qualities. In a short time, therefore, Borso was thoroughly analysed, and the inference drawn was that he appeared incapable of anything, and more especially of succeeding in the military line. "Well," exclaimed the good old baron, on his friend's return, "what think you of our young warrior? Will he not cut a figure in the field? That hope is my great comfort." "I have seen him," replied the other; "he seems hardly sensible of the difficulties of the profession." "So much the better, perhaps," returned his father; "he will experience them soon enough." "True, but when the time comes, I feel he will scarcely persist in his resolutions" "How so?" said the baron, impatiently interrupting the officer; "can he be likely to fail in the sole object of all his wishes?" "Assuredly I think so," replied his friend. "My dear brigadier," exclaimed the poor father, somewhat affected, "do not say so." "Hear me, my dear baron," added the officer; "it is not that I am so much afraid of the young man's ignorance and unwillingness to engage in study, such as they appear to be now. United to talent, his duties would speedily correct all this." "Then if he be only ignorant," interrupted his father, "he will do like so many others—he will learn; let it pass." "Yes, my good baron, but what makes me afraid of engaging with him is that very military air that seems to strike you so much; it is one of the most equivocal virtues a soldier can have. Pardon me, I see it afflicts you, baron, but what can I say? My regard for you compels me to be thus open with you; for, to say the truth, becoming modesty is one of the most desirable qualities in military society Honour and reputation, the great objects in the field, are to be pursued with caution and delicacy, the best foundation even for military qualities. But were such characters as your son Borso to mingle in our messroom, with their bold and blustering manners, to decide, contradict, and laugh in people's faces, they would infallibly have their throats cut in less than a month. This assumption, these false pretensions to merit, united to expressions of arrogance and contempt, will not be tolerated with impunity by gentlemen of our profession." "Yet recollect, brigadier, he is still very young. can you make no allowances? Is there not yet time?" "No, I fear not, baron; you may take it for a maxim, too late for your boy, that he who is not educated when he ought will never be educated. I daresay you found it impossible to succeed!" "True," said the poor baron, as he turned away, and terminated the conversation. Many were the doubts, many the plans that passed through his mind, but after all he knew not what line of conduct to

adopt. He could not but admit the justice of his friend's remarks, yet he was quite at a loss how to act upon them, and in short, went on lamenting day after day, without being able to fix upon any plan. In the meanwhile, this hopeful youth, like an ill weed, continued to thrive apace, becoming stronger and more formidable to those about him. But the same qualities predominated, the boy's boldness became impudence in the youth and headstrong temerity in the man.

His native state finally appearing too narrow a stage for his exploits, and little sensible of his merit, he resolved to enter upon a wider sphere, in which his genius and good fortune might render him a hero. He obtained a commission in a German regiment, and set out for Vienna The old baron felt greatly relieved by his absence, but he was not long at peace. Borso appeared to have assumed the uniform only to verify the predictions of the brigadier; he bore it during six months! At first he felt a little restraint; his youth and the little experience he possessed in the profession were in his favour; but he soon became so notorious and overbearing, as these wore off, that his mess would no longer tolerate him, and he received three challenges. The first of these was prevented by the police; the second he himself contrived to avoid by giving information of the time and place. But in the third he was not so fortunate, for his commander, weary of his absurdities and of his barefaced impudence, availed himself of it to get rid of one who did him so little credit. He let the duel take its course, and when the hour approached, his adversary was found waiting our hero's arrival on the spot, but he never came. From that period, his fellow-officers refused to associate with him or receive him into their parties, so that he was compelled to solicit his discharge and retire to Modena.

The city soon rang with the fame of his exploits in Germany, he took care to trumpet them forth in all the societies in which he appeared. He adorned his narrations astonishingly, despising all reason and probability with true military *sang froid* In about six months, however, his reign was at an end; the real facts became known; letters came from Vienna, and the tragic glory of the scene was turned into complete farce He played his new character about a year, when, becoming weary of it, he resolved to employ his talents once more, conceiving it wrong to deprive the world of his services—a resolution to which his circumstances (his father no longer honouring his bills) added no little force; and the baron soon after dying, he was treated with less ceremony than before. Without loss of time, then, he applied for admission into the troops of one of the petty sovereigns of Italy. "There are no great laurels to be reaped there, to be sure," he cried, "but then the danger is proportionably less."

Setting out from Modena, he went instantly to court, where he contrived to be presented, and to make an offer of his services to the prince He fondly imagined that tidings of his German campaign had not reached the capital, and that he had free scope to display his heroic qualities, which could not fail to prove his merit. The reverse of this, nevertheless, happened. The prince took care to make inquiries, which convinced him that the apparent valour and intrepidity

of our hero did not extend beyond his words and looks; that his sole object in applying for admission into his regiments was to earn a quiet livelihood, and for this reason he resolved to reject him. Borso, however, had secured his presentation and doubted not of success.

The quality of modesty, serving for a recommendation to all other virtues, was one to which our hero had a decided antipathy, and he showed not the slightest traces of it in his interview with the prince. On the contrary, he summoned all his confidence, the better to display his warlike qualities to advantage, and to appear even greater than he was. So gross were the lies and extravagances that he uttered as completely to upset the prince's gravity, while Borso, who interpreted this into a mark of approbation, proceeded with fresh ardour in his career. At length he proposed to be immediately enrolled in the royal bodyguard, upon which the prince inquired if he knew how to perform his exercise. "Oh, excuse me," returned the hero; "let us say no more of that!" "But I should like to see you," continued the prince. "There! take your sword; it will do as well as a musket, for aught I know, and I will review you." The exercise commenced, and after a variety of manœuvres, the prince gave the word of command, "Quick march!" Away Borso marched, and by chance the door lying before him, he reached the entrance, expecting the command, "Right about wheel!" But this never came, and he was constrained to march on. The moment he had got into the gallery, the prince ordered his chamberlain to close the doors, while Borso continued to march along. In this way, with his sword drawn, he traversed the great hall and galleries before a crowd of nobility and courtiers, all eagerly pushing forward to get a view of the *Prince's Hero*, by which name he was ever afterwards known. At length he reached the great staircase, still anxiously awaiting his recall, till, having sense enough to sheath his sword, he marched off home, and thence to the city of Modena, where, as the adventure appeared to him to be very creditable to himself, he related it in all companies.

Luigi Sanvitale.

LUIGI SANVITALE.

NOVELLA I.[1]

HE who, nursed in the bosom of ease and uninterrupted prosperity, has been accustomed from his infancy to the indulgence of all his fondest wishes can form no just idea of the real evils of life. The prejudices that he acquires by degrees become fixed and inveterate; he is apt to imagine himself not only superior, but almost of a different nature and composition to the bulk of mankind, whom he is inclined to rank little higher than the brutes, while he himself arrogates the right of tyrannising over his dependants and inferiors.

In the Roman annals has been preserved the name of Vedio Pollione, a rich patrician, and a striking example of the character above alluded to. Indeed, to so great an extreme did he carry his luxurious taste in regard to the delicacies of his table, that he kept a private fishpond of lampreys, which he was accustomed to feed with human blood, to give them a more poignant relish. To this character of a complete gourmand he added the most refined cruelty, inventing new kinds of chastisement for his slaves, which he took pleasure in applying on the slightest occasions of offence; yet, notwithstanding the ferocity of his character, it could not be denied that he displayed the utmost courtesy and refinement of manners in public, insomuch as to attract the particular notice and esteem of the Emperor Augustus. On one occasion he fixed to take supper with Pollio at his own house on a certain day. We may easily imagine the extraordinary display of luxury and delicacy of every kind to greet the eyes of the imperial guest. The flesh of every animal, most judiciously and exquisitely disguised, was laid under contribution; fish of the greatest rarity and most delicious taste, the finest fruits the seasons of every country could afford, were all presented in plate and vases of the richest material and workmanship. The feast in fact was glorious, and went off with the most charming conviviality and success, until the rarest wines began to be more freely circulated, and the joy and satisfaction of the Emperor was at its height; even the slaves seemed to catch the enlivening influence as they offered their best services with steady foot and light hand All indeed, except one unfortunate, who happened to be carrying a fine crystal vase, when unluckily his foot slipped, and it fell with a crash to the ground. With the most careless air, Pollio, turning his head, ordered him to be thrown

[1] The above story is announced as having been borrowed from Seneca, "De Ira," lib. iii.

into the fishpond, to give a higher relish to the lampreys. But the poor slave, terrified at the idea of so shocking a fate, ran and threw himself at the Emperor's feet, beseeching that he would obtain for him some other kind of death. Not a little surprised at both the novelty and severity of the sentence, the monarch told the slave to rise, adding, "Go, offer up thy thanks to Jupiter Omnipotent, who brought me hither to sup with thy master to-night: thou art a lucky slave!" Then turning towards Pollio with a reproving countenance, he gave orders that all the fine crystals should be thrown into the pond, instead of the poor slave's carcase, and thus gave his courtier a lesson in humanity at the expense of his taste for fish.

NOVELLA XII.[1]

In the city of Placenza there occurred a singular circumstance not very long ago, the relation of which cannot fail to give pleasure to benevolent minds. A young cavalier happened one evening to be going to join a party of friends, when a poor man in wretched attire crossed his path, and in a quick bold tone asked him for his money. The cavalier, by no means an Orlando Furioso in point of courage, presented him, as he was requested, with his purse; which the thief opened and counted out six pieces, instantly returning to him the rest. The next minute he disappeared. Convinced by the singularity of the act that he must be some indigent wretch, the cavalier, without the least desire to molest him, resolved to keep him in sight if possible, and was lucky enough to see him dart, at no great distance, into a miserable little hovel. He then advanced and knocked at the door, where the robber directly after appeared. What was his surprise and terror to behold the man he had just robbed! Throwing himself at his feet, he implored his mercy in the name of his destitute and suffering family, whose wretchedness had driven him to such an act. "Good man," said the cavalier, "do not distress yourself. I did not follow you to do you any sort of harm: it was only curiosity that led me to watch you; I wished to know your motive. Let me see those for whom you ventured your life." He was shown a miserable group; a few tattered rags, a little straw, a mother's pallid and careworn looks, and wild, half-famished children, crying and calling for bread, made up the woful picture. The cavalier turned his head aside; he could not restrain his tears; then addressing the father of the family, he said, "I came to bring you the purse; relieve your poor children;" and he darted from the spot.

[1] This incident is stated to have really occurred, as it is here related, to a gentleman who acted thus generously in return.

Count Carlo Gozzi.

COUNT CARLO GOZZI.



THE writings of Count Gozzi are chiefly distinguished among those of his Italian contemporaries of the eighteenth century by their wit and spirit, and the influence they exercised over the taste and manners of the age. His novels perhaps constitute the least portion; his romantic and fantastic drama, which produced a sort of revolution in the Italian stage, having acquired for him the highest degree of reputation. In his comedies and farce he was surpassed by none, and such was the degree of popularity he acquired, as not only to rival that of Goldoni, but to induce the latter, in the bitterness of his chagrin, to leave the Italian stage open to his rival, and seek a more favourable reception in a foreign land. We find him mentioned in M. Sismondi's "Literary History of the South" in terms of high commendation, no less as a writer of fiction than as a poet and a man of wit. "It was thus," observes that author, "that Count Gozzi acquired a knowledge of the use which might be made of the marvellous, and of the admiration of the people for deceptions and metamorphoses accomplished on a great scale upon the stage, in a word, of the emotions which attend the revival of the early fictions familiar to our childhood. He selected all the fairy tales that appeared to him best calculated to produce a brilliant effect. He dramatised them, and gave them to the public, accompanied with such magnificence of decoration and surprising machinery as did not fail to draw forth testimonies of the liveliest applause. The humour of the actors, and the animation and interest which the author contrived to throw into these time-worn fictions, gave them all the effect of a tragi-comedy, equally interesting and amusing. Indeed, Gozzi seemed to have imbibed the very spirit of fairy fable, and he always preserves the sort of probability we look for in a fairy tale.'[1] The latter remark will apply to his novels, which are superior to those of any author, perhaps, who flourished in the eighteenth century. They were received, as well as his dramas, with the greatest enthusiasm by the Germans; many of his pieces were translated; and it has been observed that we ourselves are little less indebted than the Germans to the fantastic drama of Gozzi. He may be considered indeed as the father of the modern glories of the pantomime, which have conferred even more pleasure than his novels upon the past and rising generations.

[1] Literature of the Italians, vol. ii. p. 402, English translation.

NOVELLA I.

A CERTAIN Count, a great master of the whip, and well known in the sporting circles, was busily engaged in breaking in a fine young horse, which he intended for his chariot. For this purpose he put him in harness with another steed accustomed to the bit, and passed the greater part of the day flourishing his lash on his own coach-box in the greatest style. By merely shaking the reins, he could put them to all their paces, to amble, trot, and gallop at pleasure. In fact, though the beast was very stubborn, he had nearly mastered him, of which he was not a little vain, as he had had many hair-breadth escapes, and encountered infinite perils in the task Every time he turned out, being twice a day at least, he put the streets in an uproar; the wheels, the voice, the whip, and the horses' hoofs all uniting to produce a most discordant concourse of rude sounds. The passengers fled in all directions, bestowing their maledictions upon him, while the windows were crowded with heads thrust out to behold the cause of such a hideous din. This was his great triumph and delight, and added fresh ardour to his jockeyship, until unluckily on one occasion, transported beyond all bounds, he attempted to accomplish a very difficult turn, when the road being drenched in rain, brought steed, chariot, and charioteer, in all their pride, with a tremendous and ruinous clatter, down to the ground. But the invincible hero soon resumed his seat, brandished his whip, shouted, threatened, and swore; but it was all it vain; the unlucky horse lay quite still, and nothing could induce him to rise. Dreading lest his reputation should suffer from this event, and the people no longer run in crowds to behold the famous Orlando and his Veghantino pass along, he became doubly anxious to retrieve his credit, and called all his lacqueys to his assistance. But the poor beast lay so completely bound down in his harness, with half the relics of the chariot upon his back, that it would have been easier to untie the Gordian knot than to extricate him. The noble Count, overwhelmed with shame at his defeat, sprang from his seat, ran to the horse's head, and tried a variety of expedients to raise him from the ground, But whistling, kicking, flogging, and persuading were equally ineffectual, the poor beast being far too much entangled to attend to them. He only snorted and foamed, and bit and kicked, in answer to every expedient proposed to him by his master. So, finding that he could do nothing with the horse, he determined to try his hand on the coach, and, with the assistance of all present, he attempted to lift it off the beast's back, another party acting simultaneously to free the horse by pinching, pulling, and drawing him by the ears and tail, in order to produce some impression upon him. But this was only attended with the same success as before: they were, in short, compelled to desist. As in very desperate cases every man thinks himself entitled to give an opinion, so now in the Count's, or rather his horse's, utter extremity, all proposed contradictory plans, believing themselves full as able and profound mechanicians in the art of raising up a given weight as either a Euclid or

an Archimedes. Yet nothing was effected except harassing the poor beast, who expressed the most decided objection to getting up, as if desirous of disgracing his master for his unskilful conduct, or perhaps anxious to keep out of his way and no longer to tempt the whip. The Count was plunged in grief and despair. But just at this time it happened that one Moscione, a wag, passed that way, who, beholding the tumult and fracas at a distance, hastened towards the spot, and shouting with a voice of authority, ran among them. "Stand back, I say; keep quiet there! A plague upon the idiots! let the horse alone! Leave him to me, I say! You are the Pope's soldiers with a vengeance, and I daresay could work if you had a whip at your back, but without it you will do nothing!" The Count, hearing his confident and authoritative language, began to take breath, flattering himself that he had found a very Solomon; and reiterating his command, bade all the people make way and let him proceed to work.

So Moscione, casting a knowing look on the whole concern, bit his lips and frowned, and then apparently proceeded to a minute examination, often stopping, as if considering very deeply the remedy in view. The spectators, in spite of his abuse of them, stood looking on with an air of respect and reverence, with the Count at their head, his eyes and mouth wide open, expecting to see him perform little less than a miracle. After completing his examination, and reflecting for a long time, during which the people around stood as still as death, Moscione turned short upon the Count, and said, "Let the beast rest!" And having uttered this, he quietly went his way.

When the people had a little recovered from their surprise, they burst into immoderate fits of laughter, chiefly directed at the Count, who for a long time stood waiting for his return, believing that he was gone to seek for some new mechanical apparatus for raising his horse. But he might have stood there until the day of judgment; no Moscione appeared there any more. He was, finally, compelled to have his chariot taken away piecemeal, while his fine young steed was dragged to the stables useless, at least for the Count's purposes, ever afterwards.

At first he vowed to be revenged upon the impertinent wag, Moscione; but the latter only said, laughing, "Let him prove that I did him any injury, and I will pay the damages;" and in this way he kept up the laugh against the Count: a proper reward for his extreme vanity and folly.

NOVELLA VII

HAPPENING to recollect an amusing incident that occurred in my own times at the Church of Santi Ermacora and Fortunato (which the Venetians, making two saints into one, call the Church of Santo Marcuola), I will repeat it to you as follows. Messer Gherardo Benvenga was a Venetian silk-mercer, a very pleasant and good kind of man, and as creditable as you would wish to find any tradesman. Rising

early, as usual, one Sunday morning, being the day he had fixed upon, to save time, for the payment of the half year's rent of his shop, he was no sooner washed and dressed than he counted out the money. "First of all," he says, "I will go to mass, after putting these ten sequins in my purse, and when I have heard mass, I will just step and despatch this other little affair." He had no sooner said it than he snatched up his mantle, crossed himself devoutly, and sallied forth. Passing along near the said church, he heard, by the tinkling of a little bell, that the mass was going out. "Oh," he cried, "it is going, full of unction." So he hastens into the church, touches the holy water, and approaches the altar where the priest pronounces the *introido*. He knelt upon a form, where there was no other person except a very pleasing and good-natured looking lady, adorned in the Venetian fashion, with a Florentine petticoat and a black silk vest, apparently just from the mercer's, trimmed with sleeves of the finest lace, along with gold rings, bracelets of the richest chain gold, and a necklace set with beautiful diamonds, while, full of devotion and modesty, she held a very prettily bound book in her hands, from which she was singing hymns like an angel. Messer Gherardo turned his eyes towards her a few moments, anxious to profit by so lovely and edifying an example, without the least alloy of any more terrestrial feeling, and accordingly drew a little psalter from his pocket, and began, quite absorbed within himself, and shaking his head with emotion, to join in the anthem.

The mass being at length over, Messer Gherardo bethought himself, according to courteous custom, of making a chaste obeisance to the lady; but while he was preparing, she had already passed, and he followed, marvelling within himself in what manner she would have returned his intended civility. On getting out, he instinctively took the road to pay his ten pieces to the landlord, an agent for one of the noble Morosini family, and knocking at the door, he said, "I am come here to pay money as usual, but you have never yet returned my calls to pay me anything; come and look at my shop some day;" and in this jocular strain he thrust his hand into his purse, feeling on all sides without finding a single sequin. "Am I out of my wits?" he cried. "What is this?" and he rolled his eyes like a demoniac, as if under the operation of the bitterest torments. At length, feeling something hard sticking in a corner of his purse, and hastily seizing it, he drew forth a beautiful bracelet of fine gold with diamond clasps, amounting to the value of some two hundred ducats The poor tradesman was half petrified at the sight. At first he believed it to be the effect of witchcraft, then a trick; and was altogether so much at a loss, that turning briskly round, while the agent grinned in his face, he ran down the steps without saying a single word "Messer Gherardo, good Messer Gherardo" he cried, as he held pen and paper in hand to give him a receipt, "what is the matter?" Then looking out of the window, he beheld him running along at a furious pace, every one making way for him. The agent, shaking his head (for he now thought him a little beside himself), returned to his accounts, regretting only that he had not received the money, while Messer Gherardo, who had all his wits about him as far as his interest was concerned, hastened to the

house of his friend the goldsmith, anxious to ascertain the value of the toy, in lieu of the sum he had lost. When he heard it amounted to at least two hundred ducats, he suddenly bethought him of the richly dressed lady who stood near him at mass, imagining he had seen it upon her arm, but of this he was not certain. He next conjectured she had played him a trick, but neither the time nor place seemed to warrant such a supposition. Besides he did not know her, nor she him, though he wished to learn where she lived. "I think I have guessed it though now," he exclaimed, as if a sudden bright thought had struck him. "My purse lay beside me; I was buried in profound devotion, and she, wanting money, thrust her hand into my money-bag, and by accident left the bracelet behind her." Yet how to reconcile this, he thought, with so much fashion, beauty, and devotion as she displayed? He felt ashamed of such an accusation, and tried to banish it from his mind. He resolved, however, to keep the bracelet and quietly await the result; then returning in better spirits to settle his account with the agent, not without some jeers, he pretended to have forgotten the money, which, having now paid, he felt much happier and easier, and, with a smile on both sides, they took leave.

The next day Messer Gherardo, walking along the streets, observed, upon turning a corner, affixed to a pillar the following advertisement in large letters: "*Lost or stolen, a rich gold bracelet, with handsome diamond clasps; whoever will restore it to the owner, by leaving it at the sacristy of Santo Marcuola, shall receive a handsome reward*" Messer Gherardo, thunderstruck at these words, read them again and again, as he would otherwise have had no scruples in retaining the bracelet. As it was, however, such was the singularity of the case, that he could not help laughing as he directed his steps towards the said sacristy, where, upon his arrival, he inquired for the curate. Taking him on one side, he said, "My reverend father, my business with you is no other than a confession, and if you will give me permission, I will inform you. But you must grant me one condition, without which I must take my leave as I came." "Speak out," replied the curate; "what is it? If proper, it is granted." "Then," returned Messer Gherardo, "I am the man who found the bracelet; but I will never restore it, except it be to the lady herself. Now I beg you will not attribute this to any suspicion, or any improper motive, only it will be far preferable, on the lady's account, that I should return it to her without other witnesses. If you will be so good as to point out her abode to me, you may rely upon it that I will go forthwith, like a good subject of the Catholic Church, and return it to the owner; otherwise you must excuse me I shall keep the bracelet, and without the slightest scruples of conscience" The curate replied, "To any person who should restore such an ornament I have received orders to give three sequins, that he might treat himself to a good dram; but as to you, signor, you are perhaps not in want of one." "Signor," retorted Messer Gherardo, "I would not return it for a hundred sequins; but if I may restore it into the lady's own hands, I will require nothing." "My son," replied the curate, "I would recommend to you to entertain a little more reverence and holy fear of

Heaven. Surely you would not keep what is not yours; but as you seem resolved to restore it only to the lady, so be it. I will call my clerk, since you are so very obstinate, and he shall point out to you her dwelling." So, after accompanying him a little way, the little fat clerk said, "That is it, signor," pointing to a very handsome-looking and spacious house; and upon gaining admission he was shown up a magnificent staircase into a large saloon, the walls all covered with silk linings, the sight of which made the mercer's heart glow; and such was his confusion at the idea of his temerity in entering, that he could scarcely ascertain the quality of the silk At first he thought of making his escape, imagining that he had committed some gross blunder, and might be running his head into a great scrape. While doubtful in what way to act, but gradually edging out, a maid-servant advanced from the staircase, crying, "Who is it? Pray who are you and what do you want?" Half struck dumb, with his hat held politely in his hand, Messer Gherardo replied, "I wish to see the lady of the house, and, if perfectly convenient to her ladyship, to be permitted to speak with her; and this he said in his usual style when waiting on the great to receive commissions. "Madam," cried the girl, calling to her mistress in an adjacent apartment, "it is a gentleman who wishes to speak to you about some business." "Then let him come. Why do not you show him in?" answered a voice that startled our poor tradesman, as he hastened to obey her commands. Sitting in an easy-chair, he discovered, on entering, the same identical beautiful lady whom he had seen at mass, a surprise that had almost cost him his life, for a few degrees more would infallibly have amounted to a fit of apoplexy. The lady looked full at Messer Gherardo, and grew pale as the wife of Lot when she was turned into a pillar of salt; in fact, she had nearly swooned away; for it had never entered into her head, when she first missed her bracelet, that she could have left it behind on withdrawing her hand out of the old gentleman's purse. But such was her hurry to secure the ten pieces, which she effectually did, as she observed him absorbed in his devotions, that it is hardly surprising she was not aware of the loss of it when it came unclasped. On the other hand, she concluded she must have lost it on the road from church, or she would never have had the folly to advertise it. Little did she think, then, such shame and exposure were reserved for her. But Heaven, that frequently punishes guilty mortals in a way they least expect, never fails to overtake offenders. Messer Gherardo, in his turn, fixed his eyes upon the lady, whose looks were still directed towards him, neither of them uttering a word. At length, however, our tradesman, being naturally possessed of much presence of mind and discrimination, further disciplined by his habit of attending to all ranks and descriptions of purchasers, pulled the fatal bracelet from his pocket, and holding it by one end, proceeded to observe. "I am at a loss, madam, to say in what manner the accident occurred; it is plain that you lost this bracelet, but the wretch has stolen ten sequins out of my purse. Yet you see I have caught him, and hold him fast by the hair," showing the bracelet in his hand; "and if he refuses to make restitution of my money, which is my heart's blood,

I will put him into such durance that you will never have the pleasure of beholding the offender again. I know that he is a familiar friend, very dear to you, and that you love him as well as woman ever loved such pretty things. For the sake of your reputation and of your family, then, I would advise you to pay his fine, or I will take such revenge upon him as will prove very disagreeable to you. If, on the other hand, you consent to pay what he owes me, the scandal of this affair shall go no further than ourselves, and I will set the thief free; not, however, without desiring you to give him a word of advice for the future, and a little correction at your hands, such as he will remember to the latest day of his life." In spite of her confusion, the lady could not avoid bursting into a fit of laughter as he concluded; and upon recovering her presence of mind, she adopted the most prudent course, by walking to her desk and taking out ten sequins, perhaps the identical pieces she had pilfered, and which had arrested the guilty bracelet in the very act. Turning towards Messer Gherardo, she said: "I vow, my dear signor, that the moment the rogue had committed the deed, he ran away from me, dreading my displeasure. Here is the money he stole; and since you are pleased to set him at liberty and to keep the affair secret, which I entreat you to do, I shall consider myself eternally bound to you. As you say, I will keep him in order for the future, and prevent the possibility of his becoming guilty of such an offence again." She then counted the pieces into his hand, and received the bracelet in return; and after a few more ceremonies, the good man took his leave. It is certain that this lady was a woman of fashion, of respectable family and connections, the wife of a wealthy citizen, too fond of gaiety and extravagance. Her husband not supplying her fast enough with money for dresses and play, she was in the habit of drawing from other resources, in the manner we have here detailed. It is thus that our errors and vices obscure the intellect and lead us gradually into the abyss of ruin.

NOVELLA VIII.

As more lucky adepts than the lady in the art of thieving, I shall proceed to give an account of three very accomplished geniuses in their way, namely, Carlo Foschino, Girolamo Petrani, and Menico Cedola, belonging to the city of ——. And perhaps, as the scene of action did not lie in a church, and the spoils were but of inconsiderable value, Heaven permitted the rogues to make their escape, otherwise they would have been placed in an awkward predicament, and might have found the grapes they plucked uncommonly sour, and such as would effectually have disgusted them with the fingering art in future.

It happened to be a year of great scarcity, and more especially in the province of O——, insomuch that the villagers died of hunger, while the grain and vines of every kind looked as if they had been ridden over by troops of horse, affording such a prospect as nearly

drove the farmers and their landlords distracted. A fine time indeed for those who had nothing to do but eat the fruits of others! So that the owners were compelled to keep watch day and night, though the harvest was hardly worth the pains. More for whim than want, Carlo Foschino agreed with his companions to make an attack on one of the vineyards, celebrated for the sweetness of its grapes, at Santo Martino di ——, which is situated at a short distance from the city, intending not only to eat as much as they liked, but to fill a good basket or two for future use. With this view each of them took his pannier under his arm, and sallying forth about midnight, they arrived at the land of promise, into which they cautiously entered. When once fairly in possession, they proceeded to clear the ground before them in great style, whispering one another at intervals, "How good they are!" "Yes, so sweet! what a flavour! quite exquisite! It is a real paradise for us hapless mortals;" and thus feasting and applauding, they did great execution, sweeping everything before them in order to get at fresh bunches, until they were fairly weary and in danger of suffocation. Then drawing their well-sharpened knives, they began afresh the work of destruction, filling their panniers with all the expedition in their power They were proceeding merrily through a fine plantation, having finished the better half of their task, but could not avoid making a rustling noise with the branches and scattering a few leaves; and the night being so still that a nest of ants at work would have been heard, this was enough to rouse the jealousy of three armed myrmidons on watch, who, like men of war, were scouring those coasts, to give all freebooters a warm reception with their great rusty blunderbusses and enormous slugs, in any shape but round. Hearing a noise of the crashing of branches, one of the watchmen discharged his piece in that direction, while a sudden rush was made, and a cry set up enough to shake the soul of a hero. "Thieves! thieves! that way! leap the ditch! shoot, kill them! oh, that is good, by San Bellino!" Yet Heaven willed that the shot should miss its aim; and the wily robbers, not forgetting their panniers, started off at the sounds of vengeance they heard, using their utmost efforts to escape along a narrow path. The night was dark, and they often stumbled over the stalks of the vine or of the Indian-corn growing in the field, though without paying attention to the circumstance, the entangling and tearing and trampling of leaves giving them little chance of escape from their fierce pursuers, whose threatening cries sounded nearer and nearer, till they imagined they felt themselves run through the body. In this extremity Petrani whispered in a soft voice as he continued running, "My friends, let us throw our panniers away and have a chance for our lives!" To this Cedola replied, hardly able to draw his breath, "You say well, let them go." "No, no," cried Foschino; "take heart, brothers, and leave the matter to me!" So forthwith he began to bellow as loud as he could, "Mercy upon me! that last shot has pierced me through; I am dying, though I did not feel it before; my blood is spouting out like new wine from the barrel!—Confirm what I say, you blockheads, and make your escape." Then Cedola began to cry, "Mercy, mercy upon us! try to get a little farther;

the wound is perhaps not mortal, and we will fetch you a surgeon." "No," replied the wily Foschino, in a dying voice, the better to keep up the cheat, "it is all over with me. Those cruel rascals have murdered a poor Christian for eating a bunch of grapes; yet, by the Holy Virgin, they will have to swing for it, that is some consolation!" And thus saying, they proceeded with flying colours, their panniers heaped up with grapes. For the stupid watchmen, imagining all they heard to be true, began to consider the matter and take more time. "Do you hear what he says?" cried one. "That I do," cried the second. "And you, do you hear?" they added to the third, one of the oldest cut-throats in all Italy. "Let them take it, by all the saints, it is very well; they will obey the seventh commandment in future. I will go nearer, for I daresay they must have left loads of grapes behind them, the wretches!" and they proceeded more cautiously in pursuit. Foschino hearing footsteps stealing along, afraid of discovery, and at the same time of losing the grapes and receiving a good bastinado from the watchmen, resolved, as he felt himself quite wearied out, to go no further. "Leave me here to die, dear friends. I am only grieved that there is no priest at hand to confess me, but Heaven's will be done! Fly, save yourselves! Remember me to my poor wife and children, and perform my last wish!" During this time the foolish watchmen were listening, as he continued to add, "Be witness that I leave my wife all I have, in trust for the benefit of our children after her, in equal portions, be kind to her and to them, and assist them to bring my body away to-morrow, that I may receive Christian burial, and persuade my friends to offer up a few alms and masses for my poor soul I feel that I am going now, and do you go too!" The rustics hearing these sad words, stopped, and now began to hold a colloquy upon this unlucky case; while Cedola and Periani set up the most horrid lamentations, wringing their hands and sobbing as if their hearts would break. "Nay, do not give way to despair. A plague upon the watchmen! they will hang for it; and upon the grapes! we may indeed call them sour. Well, we have the comfort to think that the watchmen will be hanged if you die; they were only to take us into custody, not to take our lives. There never was such a piece of barbarity, such a wilful murder, since the world began. See how he bleeds, poor fellow! he will not live long. Come, let them even kill us all, since they have killed our best friend, a gentleman who only joined us for a frolic Let the wretches dip their hands in the blood of us all, but we are men of quality, and they shall smart for it." Upon hearing these words and cries so boldly uttered, the guards concluded it to be a serious affair, and being really afraid that they had killed the gentleman, began to think of running in their turn. But when they next heard him say, in a feeble and lamentable voice, "*In manus tuas, Domine, commendo spiritum meum,*" they could no longer control their fright, but took to their heels, just as they heard the others utter, "He is dead, he is gone for ever, cold, cold, my friend!" and a fresh ululation was set up, which added wings to the flight of the watchmen. This done, they departed at their leisure, the dead man leading the way with the panniers. When the watch

ventured to stop, one of them said, "Who shot him, think you? It was not I, I am sure." "Nor I" "Nor I." "Well, but," said another, "you agreed that I should fire." "True, but you should have shot over his head and not through his body." "Well," replied the man, "I thought I did shoot high up into the air. I wonder how it could have killed him;" and thus, each speaking in his own defence, full of fear and trembling, they returned home, but were unable to sleep a wink that night; while the three knaves, having recovered from their terror, were enjoying themselves comfortably over their panniers of grapes In the morning the thieves gave an account of their adventure, which threw their auditors into such fits of laughter that some have not ceased even to this day. As for the poor rustics, although they never found the corpse, or had any charge brought against them, they yet continued uneasy and suspicious, having the fear of the gallows perpetually before their eyes, and not having courage to make any inquiries into the affair, lest they should betray themselves, and raise suspicions that they had been guilty of so wicked a homicide.

Luigi Bramieri.

LUIGI BRAMIERI,

AN ADVOCATE OF PLACENZA, WHO FLOURISHED DURING THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.



HISTORICAL NOVEL.

DRAWN FROM THE ROMAN ANNALS, ENTITLED "INSTANCE OF FRATERNAL AFFECTION."

AFTER the death of the great Julius, who fell a victim to his own inordinate ambition and the ferocious love of liberty in others, a liberty which had no longer force to sustain itself, shaken to its very foundations by the altered character of the people, the terrific Triumvirs commenced their sanguinary reign. Enemies no less of the people than of each other, they contested the empire of the world, being unanimous only in satiating their revenge by a general proscription, which laid the heads of all their private enemies at their feet, disguising their savage cruelty under the hypocritical pretext of consulting the public good. In the immense list of names to be sacrificed at the will of the cowardly, jealous, and mean-spirited Octavius was found that of Lucius Cæsar, maternal uncle to Marc Antony, one of the three Triumvirs.

That wretched and abandoned character, on whom Nature had lavished some of her choicest gifts, had become addicted to almost every species of vice, and frequently been the object of the most eloquent invectives and startling denunciations from the prophetic lips of Tully; ever mindful of which, he had already slaked his thirst of vengeance in that great orator's blood. He then continued at Rome in order personally to inspect the execution of his savage decrees, apparently feasting his eyes with the sight of lifeless trunks and lacerated limbs, belonging to the most virtuous citizens, who were unable to avoid his rage.

Lucius Cæsar himself imagined he could devise no surer methdo of escape than by taking refuge in the mansion of his sister Julia. Having been brought up with one another from infancy, nearly of the same age, and greatly resembling each other in point of character and virtue, their mutual devotion and attachment were without bounds, the ties of blood being further cemented by lasting esteem and friendship. Marc Antony's mother expressed the most heroic contempt for the unjust and cruel decrees of the Triumvirate, though the penalty of

she consider a variety of schemes for his more permanent safety, and finally formed a resolution of a noble and perilous nature, which she carried into immediate execution. With the boldness of innocence and virtue, she sallied forth alone; she courageously bent her steps towards the forum, where Marc Antony, with his two colleagues, was seen seated upon the tribunal, and confronting them with the utmost intrepidity, she said, "I come hither to accuse myself! That compassion, to which the unhappy and unjustly persecuted are entitled, added to the tenderest affection which grew up with me from my infant years, has led me to give an asylum to one of your proscribed victims. Perhaps thou knowest him," she continued, fixing her eyes upon Marc Antony; "perhaps thy hand trembled as it added his name to the fatal list. It is Lucius Cæsar, my own brother and thy uncle. I stand, therefore, before my son under sentence of death. Execute it! I ought to rejoice at it, in a period when no virtuous person must be allowed to live!" Here she was silent, and stood unmoved before the tribunal awaiting their reply. The eyes of Marc Antony were bent upon the ground; for such a moving and heroic appeal from the lips of his mother he was quite unprepared, and some remains of natural affection and the ties of kindred, some faint recollections of younger and better days, when the love of virtue was not extinct, became visible in the struggles of his countenance, which he could not quite repress. The other Triumvirs, likewise, could not avoid testifying marks of reverence and surprise on witnessing in the heroic Julia such matronly dignity, elevation of soul, and generous affection displayed towards a brother. Though perfectly aware of the reckless ferocity of their character, which had rendered them so fatally formidable to all their fellow-citizens and to all their relatives, she had not hesitated to confront them upon the very throne of their power; and in taking them by surprise she produced the effect she had intended and desired. They could not repress their admiration; the decree against the life of Lucius was annulled; and the affectionate sister flew into her brother's arms and sobbed out the delightful tidings which she could not utter. Well did the lofty-minded matron deserve the fame she acquired by so tried and heroic an attachment, and well may history preserve her memory fresh and green, as one of the most illustrious examples of sisterly devotion in the most fearful and trying times.

Robustiano Gironi.

ROBUSTIANO GIRONI.

—o—

NOVELLA I.

How greatly do those young men deceive themselves who, impatient under the restraint of parental wisdom, sigh only for the moment when they shall be freed from every kind of subjection and enabled to give full sway to their own inclinations! Alas! their inexperience blinds them to the future; they are not yet aware that the most tranquil and delightful hours of existence are such as are enjoyed under the watchful but gentle eye of guardians distinguished by their superior worth and prudence. And when at length they have attained their object, they find themselves either overwhelmed with domestic troubles, or wearied with the repetition of those very pleasures which they fondly imagined would constitute their supreme felicity. Not unfrequently they become a prey to unforeseen cares and calamities, and live long enough to revert, with aching eye and heart, to the scenes of their childhood and their early education, with all the associations and recollections they conjure up—days which are to return no more!

Would that the following tale might confer any sort of benefit by way of example, by serving to impress this great truth deeply upon their minds, that, constituted as we are, we can encounter no risks in life more imminent than such as result from giving way to our own inclinations and passions.

Constanza Landolfi, a lady possessed of great wealth, and of noble descent, in the city of Turin, was left a widow in the bloom of her youth and beauty. She nevertheless preferred the pleasing task of educating her two young sons to the most splendid offers of any second nuptial engagement. All her most anxious efforts were directed to the formation of their tender minds, and all her hopes of happiness were involved in their success. With the warmest maternal solicitude, she sought to develop their feelings, while she cultivated their minds and instructed them in the elements of human knowledge. Heaven seemed to smile on her labours; her boys became endeared to all around them; and surely from such a beginning she had a right to augur the happiest and most flattering results.

When their more advanced age seemed to require it, Constanza became desirous of adding the advice and instructions of the most distinguished masters to what she had already done. In no branch of liberal art or science did she omit to give them all those advantages

that were calculated to render them most happy in themselves, and most useful to their friends and to their country.

Gismondo, the eldest of her sons, rewarded, almost beyond his mother's hopes, her affectionate care and tenderness. As he became more fully capable of appreciating her motives and the many sacrifices she had so cheerfully made, his filial gratitude and tenderness knew no bounds, and he looked forward to the period of her maternal care, when he should become master of his own actions, rather with a feeling of regret than pleasure. Roberto, some years younger than his brother, with a genius every way superior in the acquisition either of science or of art, was at the same time of a prouder spirit, and far more impatient of restraint, however gently imposed. Perhaps this was the only fault that cast a shade over the many bright and excellent qualities that adorned Roberto's mind. At the slightest correction he became indignant and ungovernable as a young and fiery steed that champs the bit. Inconstant in his youthful sports, he was no less so in the germs of his unfolding passions. Often, when at a loss to defend himself, he would plead the example of his young contemporaries, who enjoyed more freedom in their education; while his envy would as often manifest itself in words like the following, addressed to his mother: "Why is young ——, also of a rich and noble family, and not older than I, permitted to frequent public places and go wherever he pleases?" To which his mother would prudently return. "Beware, my son, of adducing the example of others for such a purpose; and strive rather to emulate those virtuous youths whose strongest ambition is to meet the wishes of their parents. Cannot you perceive the ridiculous figure which such examples as you mention always make in society in consequence of their premature introduction? Have you never heard how early they become initiated in the ways of vice and folly, and stand on the very brink of ruin? But too swiftly will the term of your education expire, like the beams of a fine summer morning, and vainly shall you sigh for a return." Roberto, no longer able to resist the truths thus gently enforced, would then yield, and kiss the hand stretched forth in token of forgiveness. Yet few days would elapse before the same scene was repeated: the excellent admonitions of his mother produced no deeper impression upon him than the drops of a passing shower upon the thirsty earth.

The day at length arrived when his brother Gismondo came into possession of his fortune, freed from all restraint, and prepared to act his part on the great theatre of the world. When master of his own actions, he swerved in nothing from his mother's gentle counsels; he frequented the society she most approved, and in the choice of his friends, as well as in a still more intimate connection, he felt happy in being chiefly influenced by her maternal wishes. And Heaven seemed to shower its choicest blessings on his union with an excellent and lovely woman, who presented him with the most beautiful pledges of their passion. Meanwhile it was not thus that the period of Roberto's emancipation approached: he was rejoiced beyond measure at the idea of becoming his own master, and looked down with contempt on his brother's weakness, declaring that he knew not how to avail him-

self of the riches and advantages he possessed. In truth, he no sooner felt himself at liberty, than, resolving to avoid all kind of maternal influence and superintendence, he divided with his brother the fortune left by their father and quitted his native place. This imprudent determination was a great shock to his mother's feelings, who left no means untried to dissuade him from it; but tears and prayers were alike unavailing; not even the offer of a splendid and happy alliance had any charms to detain him. The desire of complete freedom, which he ill understood, and the pressing entreaties of treacherous friends, easily triumphed over all his better feelings

Abandoning then his native country, accompanied by two friends in whom he reposed the most perfect confidence, he converted his whole property into ready money and set out for Rome. There he resided upwards of two years, and occasionally gave notice of his proceedings to his relatives, who had taken care to procure for him the attentions of the most respectable and illustrious families in that city, fondly trusting that their countenance and influence might preserve him from the errors and vices of his age. Often would his excellent mother flatter herself that he would rise superior to his early foibles and extravagance, and return to his native place. But she had soon the grief to hear that he had departed from Rome without leaving any intimation whither he had turned his footsteps. Her regrets and her inquiries were all equally unavailing, and she began to despair of reaping the least reward for the unceasing toils and anxieties of years. The sole comfort and consolation she experienced was in the society and caresses of her dear Gismondo and his children, who promised to be as beautiful and virtuous as their parents: to these, then, all her cares and affection were in a short time transferred

About this period, a charitable society was formed in the city of Turin, composed of pious ladies, with a view of relieving the wants of the poor and sick who languished in the public hospitals. Of this, Constanza became one of the most zealous members, distributing the most liberal sums out of her private fortune wherever they were most called for. Accompanied by a single domestic, she was in the habit, every morning, of inspecting the different apartments in the hospital, with a truly Christian spirit distributing food, and clothes, and consolation to such as were reduced to the last extremity of wretchedness. It happened one day, that in passing near one of the sick couches, she heard a deep sigh that affected her to the heart. She stopped, and upon hearing it again repeated, softly drew near. Heavens! what a sight did she behold! Her lost son lay stretched on the wretched pallet before her—it was Roberto himself. He raised his feeble arms; his face was deluged with tears; he had not strength even to embrace his mother. "My son, my son!" cried Constanza, in a tone of piercing anguish, "do I find you thus?" He strove a moment to reply, but weakness and surprise quite choked his utterance. Having in some degree succeeded in restoring his strength, the virtuous Constanza ordered him to be removed with the utmost caution to her own residence. There, owing to the assiduous attentions of his mother and the skill of the physicians whom she employed, Roberto so far re-

covered his exhausted strength in the course of a few days as to be enabled to give some account of the misfortunes he had met with. But first he entreated that the sons of his brother Gismondo might be sent for, and then affectionately pressing the hand of his mother to his lips, he began to relate his unhappy story.

"On my arrival at Rome with my two friends, of whose perfidy I too late became sensible, I plunged into every species of extravagance and dissipation. To remove every kind of obstacle or annoyance that presented itself in my abandoned career, I transferred the whole economy of my household to the hands of my two friends, reserving only a few bills of exchange which I wished to keep myself. My companions were indefatigable in their attention to my caprices; they omitted nothing that was likely to please me; the most splendid parties, the richest feasts, plays, games, and amusements, were all enjoyed in turn, while I vied with the most fashionable and wealthy in the magnificence of my entertainments.

"Wearied, however, with the expostulations of some of the most distinguished families in the place, who, at the entreaty of my mother, were desirous of snatching me from ruin, I soon resolved to quit Rome. In company with the same friends, and with a numerous procession of coaches and lacqueys, I next arrived at Naples. I engaged one of the most splendid residences I could find, magnificently furnished, where I received a crowd of personages, who seemed to hang only on my smiles, and who yet boasted of their vast wealth and illustrious descent. But worse than all these, a wretched and misguided passion next took possession of my bosom, and I became a victim to the most artful and abandoned of women. Boundless in my extravagance, I poured a profusion of wealth into her lap. The bitterest pangs of rage and jealousy were my reward; she would then attempt to soothe and flatter me, thus subjecting me to every variety of humiliation and suffering. For her sake I engaged in the most absurd and perilous quarrels, and mortally defied a rival to the field. Fortunately, the magistrates of the city here interfered, and prevented the loss perhaps of my worthless existence. Such is the picture of my life during that period; but mine was a career too wild, abandoned, and disorderly, to continue long. My strength began to fail me, a perpetual fever preyed upon my health and spirits, and in a short period I lay stretched upon a sick couch. In about ten days after, my two friends, approaching my bedside, said they came to acquaint me that all the ready money with which I had intrusted them for the management of my affairs was now spent, that further supplies were necessary to obtain the advice and attendance of which I stood in need, as well as to keep up my usual magnificent establishment, which, notwithstanding my decayed health, I had insisted should be done.

Without the least suspicion, therefore, I intrusted them with the key of my escrutoire, in order to supply me with all that was become necessary. But what was my confusion and despair when I learned, the ensuing day, that these two perfidious and ungrateful wretches had actually taken ship for England! Reduced and feeble as I was, I started from my couch in an agony of fear, and ran to inspect my

papers; but not a remnant of my bills, amounting to above forty thousand francs, was left; bills too which I had deposited in my most secret drawer. Suddenly then I beheld myself standing upon a precipice, and the abyss into which I was destined to fall was yawning for me beneath. In this bitter extremity no other suggestion presented itself more promising than that of applying to the persons upon whom I had lavished so much of my wealth; but they all agreed in alleging various excuses for abandoning me to my fate. To complete my disaster, I was informed that I was in debt for the splendid mansion I occupied, to an extent that would require the whole of my furniture to discharge it. The only being from whom I met with the least sympathy was one of the physicians who attended me. To him I confided the history of my disasters and of my errors: he consoled me, he took me to his own house, and attended me with the utmost care. Oh, may Heaven reward him for all his goodness to me! In a few weeks he restored me to health; and, encouraged by his kindness, I resolved to abandon a place that had proved so fatal to my repose. He furnished me with the means to do this, and with tears of gratitude I bade him farewell. I was fortunate enough to reach Bologna, but there I was seized with a violent fever, which deprived me of a part of the little fund I possessed. Scarcely half recruited, I resumed my journey, for the most part on foot, or in such wretched conveyances as I could command. At length I with difficulty reached my native place, broken in spirit and in health. How could I thus appear in the presence of my dear mother and my brother? No; I came to the resolution of seeking refuge in the hospital, where you, my kindest mother, just now discovered me."

Roberto's narrative awakened feelings of the liveliest compassion in all who listened to it. His affectionate mother left no means untried to restore him once more to health. She entreated him to take heart, for that he should share with her more than the fortune he had lost. But Roberto's spirits had received too severe a shock; his health declined daily and hourly, and the care both of the physicians and of his friends was now alike useless. In a few months after his return he breathed his last, and his end was happier than his life. Heaven was at least kind to him in thus permitting him to breathe his last sigh on the bosom of so excellent and affectionate a mother.

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